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BEATRICE CENCI

TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

(See Vol. II, p. 286)

PERSIAN SIBYL, BY GUERCINO
In the Gallery Capitolina

1577.15

BEATRICE CENCI

BY

CORRADO RICCI

Translated from the Italian

BY

MORRIS BISHOP

AND

HENRY LONGAN STUART

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ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME II

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD

First Published 1926.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE WHITEFRIARS PRESS, LTD.,
LONDON AND TONBRIDGE.

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BEATRICE CENCI

VOLUME TWO

CHAPTER XIX

THE FLIGHT OF OLIMPIO

It is time for us to return to Olimpio, prisoner "in solitary."

An *avviso* of February 20, from Rome to the Court of Urbino, stated: "The Cenci case is still pending; it is understood that the castellan of La Petrella, where Francesco Cenci was done to death, now lies a prisoner at a place in the Marches."

The news was inexact. Olimpio was still confined in Novellara Castle. He was being held there by Countess Vittoria, awaiting orders from Camillo Rosati, who had made no sign since his departure.

The countess had twice gone to the tower dungeon to interrogate Olimpio, as he lay, fettered hand and foot. The prisoner appealed to her sense of honour, "calling to her consideration the indignities he was receiving in her house, and reminding her that, as a lady of quality, she wronged herself by permitting such injustice to be done."

The signora's answer gave him an assurance that the matter would not be neglected. "Have no fear! Very soon I will have you delivered from this prison." Padre Antonio, the countess's confessor, was a more frequent visitor to Olimpio than the chatelaine herself.

Finally she wrote Rosati that he must remove his prisoner from her castle as "she had nothing" against him, and did not "care to have any hand in this intrigue." Receiving no answer, in the last days of February she let him go free, or rather, allowed him to move about at his will in the lower quarters of the castle, thus putting him in the way of effecting his escape without obliging herself to declare that she had been any partner to it.

Olimpio told his brother later that, as soon as he was

released from his cell, he made enquiries about Camillo Rosati. He received the answer that the man "had gone away, and had he not departed the lads of that village would have stoned him to death, as all that town," so they told Olimpio, "much misliked the treachery done to him by this friend."

After a few days, perhaps on March 1, he left the castle and again took the road to Rome.

Rosati received the Countess of Novellara's letter only after a long delay. In his reply he adjured her to hold "Calvetti in safe custody, as thereby she would be doing a great favour to Signor Marzio [Colonna]." When she received this missive, Olimpio was gone: she merely replied that "he had escaped."

Rosati took the unexpected news badly. It was hard to rest with so desperate a character at large and seeking his betrayer. In addition, he cut a very poor figure with his master and with Giacomo Cenci! Through carelessness or indolence he had let his victim slip through his fingers, naïvely believing that the Countess of Novellara could or would hold a prisoner of Olimpio's stamp indefinitely. Rosati's mortification must have deepened when he learned that Signor Marzio Colonna had arranged that Olimpio's imprisonment at Novellara should be publicly announced. He must have been panic-stricken when he heard that the terrible Olimpio was back in Rome.

He had arrived on March 7, the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas. In the church of La Minerva a very solemn service was going on, with a great number of cardinals present. Fra' Pietro Calvetti, sacristan, was busy at his work: about to enter the sacristy for the hundredth time, he perceived before him, in the twilight of the transept, his brother Olimpio. In a few hurried words Olimpio related his misfortune. Fra' Pietro informed his brother that all the Cenci were in prison, then, taking advantage of the throng which filled church, sacristy and cloister, he slipped Olimpio into a cell, that of a Fra' Giuliano. Fra' Pietro possessed the key to this cell, its occupant being absent on a mission.

At the close of the ceremony, Fra' Pietro hurried to his brother's side. A long dialogue took place between the two. Olimpio made a clean breast of his share and that of the Cenci and Marzio Catalano in the murder of Signor Francesco. He related his journey to Novellara, Rosati's treachery, his flight and return to the Eternal City.

At some points of his narrative Olimpio gave way to terrible paroxysms of fury against the Cenci, especially Giacomo, whom he was in a mood to shoot, because Giacomo, after persuading him to slay Francesco, "had not settled." He also inveighed against Rosati. He begged Fra' Pietro "to tell Rosati or have him told that if he did not restore the ring [Beatrice's gift, taken from him at Novellara] he would cut it from his dead finger."

Fra' Pietro made his way to a connection of his, one Agostino de Amicis, muleteer, at the Piazza delle Erbe. He charged Agostino to seek out Cesare Cenci and request him to come round to La Minerva soon, as Fra' Pietro had reason to speak with him.

Early on Tuesday, March 9, Cesare Cenci came to the convent of La Minerva, and was shown by the friar into the cell where Olimpio lay hid. If Cesare had hoped that Olimpio had been killed by Rosati, or that he was being held prisoner miles away, his surprise at seeing the man himself must have been deep and painful. The dialogue that ensued was so full of threats on Olimpio's part that it must have terrified Cenci and made him determine, by every means in his power, to get the man out of Rome. Fra' Pietro has revealed some scraps of the conversation, though at a certain crisis he left the cell, either to let the pair talk together or to escape from so distressing a scene.

Olimpio learned from Cesare Cenci that Marzio, in his prison, had confessed everything. The fugitive began to inveigh most bitterly against Lucrezia and Beatrice, who had forced him to take Catalano as an accomplice. Especially he berated Beatrice, who had twice prevented him from killing Catalano, and so forestalling all dan-

ger of his confession. "Miserable women!" cried Olimpio. "They feared that Signor Francesco would escape my blows if I had not Marzio's aid: as though I was not sure of my own strength. Then Beatrice forbade me to kill Marzio, trusting in the words of an astrologer, which avowed he would come to a bad end without any aid from Fate! Yes, truly he will come to a bad end, but after destroying all the rest of us! How carelessly—with what folly has this business been conducted!"

Cesare Cenci did not conceal his alarm. He lamented that none had sought his counsel. "You were never willing to trust in me. . . . I would have arranged matters very differently!"

Cesare's smooth words, far from calming Olimpio, provoked him to still further abuse, and to a torrent of reproaches in which his wrath gradually spent itself. "He began to fall into a great frenzy and anger," testifies the faithful brother, "saying, 'It is Signor Giacomo who is the cause of my ruin: it was he who made me commit this felony, he who ordered me to slay Signor Francesco!'"

He raved on and on. So, then! While the ladies prevent him from killing Marzio, Giacomo must try to get him out of the way by entrusting him to the care of Camillo Rosati! "Giacomo had sent him to Lombardy to kill him," and "had promised 300 scudi to Camillo. And this same scoundrel had even stolen his ring, Beatrice's own gift to him!"—"Nay, surely not! Giacomo will kill him for this!" purrs Cesare. To calm this madman, to induce him to flee, he applauds Olimpio's every word, concurring and agreeing that Giacomo has treated him most foully.

Gradually Olimpio quieted down. But he still kept shouting that he would have his own mare returned to him from Florence through Pacifico Bussone, together with the velvet costume that Beatrice had had made for him.

Cesare assures him that money will be obtained for him by some means. As for the velvet costume—he must have a little patience. Cesare hardly knows how to arrange the matter. The costume is in the monastery of Monte-

citorio, in the hands of a person who will never surrender it without an order from Beatrice—and Beatrice is in prison. He will, in any case, bring Olimpio something else. So far as the mare is concerned, he does not know where the animal can be. When Pacifico brought her back, he had abandoned her in the Piazza Giudea, and had taken to his heels, some one there having told him the police were asking after him. True, the mare had been caught by one of Giacomo's household; but by whom Cesare could not tell. However, Olimpio might rest easy on this score. Cesare would procure for him Bernardo's own horse to take its place.

Cesare Cenci departed: he returned later to Olimpio's hiding place with Agostino de Amicis, who carried a bundle in which was a doublet. Cesare explained that he had not got the money yet, but meantime was giving him the clothing. Olimpio examined the garment. It was evident at a glance that Cesare was far less acquainted with his taste in clothes than the loved mistress who had ordered the velvet coat for him. He storms afresh. This affair, of striped white material, is a doublet "only fit for pastry-cooks." He will have none of it. "Why did you not buy me one like the one I am wearing now?" Signor Cesare, furtive and conciliatory, once more excuses himself. He had not bought the thing himself. "It had been bought through a series of agents in order that its purchaser might not be discovered."

Olimpio again perforce resigned himself. He doffed his old doublet, gave it to his kinsman, Agostino, and himself put on the "pastry-cook's suit."

Then Agostino withdrew, that Cesare Cenci and Olimpio might speak more freely. He waited in the corridor for a quarter of an hour. Then Cesare came forth and said to him: "Come with me; I want to give you a horse, for you to bring to Olimpio." Olimpio himself, standing in the doorway, confirmed the order: "Go with Signor Cesare, and he will give you a horse for me; bring it to me." Agostino said that he received the horse (a "Breton horse, nearly black, crop-eared") directly from Signor

Cesare, "in a stable hard by the Cenci palace, at the Arco de' Cenci; from which he led it to his own stable." Later Fra' Pietro told a different tale, or rather gave a few extra details from which we may infer that Cesare did not wish to be observed delivering the horse directly to Agostino, Calvetti's kinsman, at the Cenci palace: "He took the horse to the stable of some barrel-carters by the inn at Trevi fountain." Thence Agostino led the horse to his own stable. In one or the other way, it is certain that it was Cesare Cenci who gave Agostino Bernardo's horse, together with a large saddle.

As for the money, what Cesare could scrape together was so little that he dared not himself put it in Olimpio's hands, for fear of facing a new outburst of fury. Fra' Pietro tells the tale: "Signor Cesare brought the money and found me in the Capitol near the cloister; and I was alone and there was no one there . . . and he accosted me and said: 'See, here is the money for Olimpio. Take it and give it him. Say naught to any one.' He went on that if I should say aught of it, he would say it was not true. And this was between us two alone, and he did not tell me how great a sum of money it was; but I went straight to Olimpio . . . and I said to him: 'Here, Olimpio, this is the money that Signor Cesare has given me.' And he took it and counted it and found that there were twenty-five scudi, made up of a lot of testoni and giulii, all wrapped up in cartridge paper. And among them were four false testoni which were worth nothing; and Olimpio said to me: 'These testoni are worth nothing!' "

Olimpio had obtained a costume, though a mean one; money, but very little; a horse, not his own; now naught remained for him but to take his departure. But whither should he go?

The brothers thought of Anticoli Campagna, where lived their two sisters (Settimia, wife of Michele Borghese, and Antonia, married to Messer Giovan Francesco Alessandri). Thither also Plautilla with her small son had repaired. But before Olimpio should adventure there,

it was well that some one should precede him, to reconnoitre the ground and to see if Olimpio might come there without peril.

Fra' Pietro and Agostino made this journey together. They departed before dawn on the morning of March 10th, from Trevi fountain.

Fra' Pietro rode Bernardo Cenci's black saddle-horse: Agostino a grey horse "which belonged to a basket weaver" from whom he had hired it. It carried a packsaddle. It was a younger horse than Bernardo's and was more vigorous. For this reason Fra' Pietro wished to exchange; but as the packsaddle hurt him, he dismounted and again mounted the black horse, which he did not again abandon.

Fra' Pietro and Agostino arrived at Anticoli Campagna at the Ave Maria. They dismounted at the house of their connection, Messer Giovan Francesco Alessandri, who lay ill in bed; they talked with him and with his wife Antonia Calvetti; later they spoke to Plautilla. Alessandri and his wife did not oppose Olimpio's projected visit, chiefly out of pity for Plautilla, on the understanding, however, that Olimpio did not plan to remain.

Fra' Pietro told the Alessandri couple that Olimpio and Plautilla "were separated and fugitives by reason of the death of a certain Roman signor of the Cenci family," whose name, they later learned, was Francesco! But Plautilla had already told of the matter, and little by little the story had reached even these mountains.

The friar then spoke at length with his sister-in-law, Plautilla. He gave her no money, of which she was in desperate need; but he sought to comfort her by telling her that Olimpio would very soon be there.

The two travellers remained only one night at Anticoli. Their return to Rome, where Olimpio was in such peril, was urgent. Among other considerations one was the fact that he was shut up in the monastery cell with but a scanty supply of food. The two were joined on the return journey by Michele Borghese, husband of Settimia,

the Calvettis' other sister. She too lived, as we know, at Anticoli.

They were on their way to Rome by the via Labicana, when, below Colonna, they fell in with Papirio, son of Giovan Francesco Alessandri and Antonia Calvetti. His father being ill, the youth had gone to fetch some goods, "or, rather, clothing, left by the elder man at Marino where he had been a tutor or confidential servant." He was on the return journey, when his uncles, Agostino, Fra' Pietro and Michele persuaded him to retrace his steps with them and come to Rome. Papirio, little more than a boy, full of curiosity and eager for amusement, easily let himself be persuaded; all the more "since he desired to see Rome."

We reproduce Papirio's words: "We came to Rome at the second hour of night. And when we had got there, Fra' Pietro and I both dismounted outside the inn at the Trevi fountain, in the piazza; and then we went to dine in the house of Signor Cardinal Borghese, in the room of a gentleman of the Cardinal named Signor Diomede. I do not know his surname, but he is a young man of about thirty-five, and he has a great brown beard, and we dined with him. And after dining we talked a little while; and then Fra' Pietro and Signor Diomede went off to sleep, both in one bed, and I slept alone, though in the same room, on some mattresses laid on the floor; and thus we passed the night. Then in the morning as soon as we had risen Fra' Pietro and I went toward La Minerva; and we entered the church, and there we knelt to say our prayers." Michele Borghese joined them in the church; he had passed the night in the house of his kinsman, the muleteer, who had also taken care of Bernardo's horse. The three then entered Fra' Pietro's cell. The friar had not gone to his monastery the night before, for he had arrived late in Rome and had not wished to arouse the friar porter and the others by ringing the bell. He had therefore asked shelter of Signor Diomede of Macerata, who was carver to Cardinal Borghese.

Fra' Pietro then went to Olimpio and informed him that

Michele and Papirio were waiting in his own cell. Olimpio replied that they should be brought in. "So we left Fra' Pietro's room," continued Papirio, "and we came into another room of the convent, which is in the first corridor when one goes up the first stairs; and there we found Olimpio. He was alone, and all three of us talked to him."

Papirio stated further that Fra' Pietro had the key of the cell at La Minerva in which Olimpio was hid; he had drawn it from his pocket to admit Papirio and Michele. After the usual greetings, Papirio asked Olimpio: "What does it mean that you are so locked up and hidden?"

"Let us be off to Anticoli," Olimpio replied, "and seek to learn naught else." Then, urged rather by his own emotions than by any questions, he once more told the whole story of his journey to Novellara, and of Camillo Rosati's treachery in attempting to poison him. He said that he had recovered "because he had vomited greatly, and that he had been laid low for three days by the poison, but his vomiting had aided him much, and had he not vomited he would have died."

"We were greatly grieved that this treachery had been done him," continued Papirio.

When Papirio and Michele left, after "some time"—we know that Olimpio talked fluently and at length—Fra' Pietro locked the door, and brought the two villagers of Anticoli into his own cell to eat. They had bought some food outside the convent; Fra' Pietro supplied the rest. Olimpio ate in the cell wherein he was shut. The others decided while at table to depart the following morning. They therefore took a turn about Rome, for Papirio longed to see the city. They also paid a visit to the Cenci palace to speak to Vittoria, whom Olimpio might not see, near neighbour though he was. In the evening they re-entered Fra' Pietro's cell. As it was the dinner hour, the friar went to Olimpio's cell and brought him cautiously to his own, to dine with the others. Finally they lay down to sleep fully dressed, both because of weariness and because they were to rise very early the

following morning. Olimpio, Papirio and Michele crowded into Fra' Pietro's bed; while the friar slept "on certain fine cloths" spread on the floor. Papirio said this all took place on Wednesday, March 12th.

They left next morning at dawn. They were roused by Agostino, who came in the darkness "below their cell" and cried: "Well? Are we not to go to Anticoli?" The window was opened at his call, and he was told to return to the inn of the Trevi fountain and saddle the horses immediately. Before leaving, Olimpio told his brother that whenever Plautilla needed money he should ask it of Signora Lodovica, who had promised it to him.

They went out through a small door of the church of Santa Minerva; perhaps the postern door opening upon an alley which led into the street of the Santissima Annunziata, a church torn down by Cardinal Ludovisi to make way for the Church of Sant' Ignazio. Olimpio and Michele went together toward Porta Maggiore; Fra' Pietro and Papirio toward the Trevi fountain, whither Agostino had preceded them to saddle the mounts. Agostino mounted Bernardo Cenci's horse and Papirio his own. Fra' Pietro bade them farewell and returned to his monastery. Papirio says that they found Olimpio and Michele waiting near the walls, close to Porta Maggiore, but within the city. Agostino, on the contrary, places the meeting "at Sant' Antonio, beyond Santa Maria Maggiore." The difference is slight; in either case they were on the way to Porta Maggiore.

Agostino, without wasting time, slipped out of the saddle and turned over his horse to Olimpio. He wished the travellers godspeed and turned back. They set out for Anticoli, Olimpio and Papirio riding, Michele Borghese on foot.

After a long march they stopped at an inn to rest, eat, and breathe their horses. Olimpio paid for all. We may choose this moment to describe his costume. He was wearing his doublet of striped white cloth, given him by Cesare Cenci, a black jerkin, "a pair of hose which were drawn tight below the knees . . . of wool and cotton of a

mixed colour, rather dark . . . a pair of stockings of Perugian serge . . . , a pair of leggings with shoes attached; and on his head a felt hat."

The three wayfarers arrived at Anticoli Campagna at the first hour of night. Michele went away to his house, which was outside the walls. Olimpio, however, descended with Papirio at the house of Messer Giovan Francesco Alessandri, where he saw his sister Antonia before any one else.

He went soon after to the master of the house, who lay ill in bed. They had a long talk; Olimpio told his woes. We do not know whether he made a clean breast of things or whether he sought to explain away the common accusations, as Alessandri was to state later. He then dined with his sister and nephew. It was at this point, it seems, that Plautilla arrived. But whether their meeting took place in the Alessandri house or the Borghese house, it is at any rate certain that it was very painful for Plautilla. When she saw her husband "she began to weep; she would not look at him," nor speak to him. Then she began to sob and cry: "Begone, begone, begone, in God's name; be off from here! You are lost, and I am lost!" But Papirio tells us that if on the one hand "she grieved and lamented," on the other hand "she was rejoiced at seeing him." Poor woman! He said to her: "'Are you angry, then?' And he touched my chin with his hand." She upbraided him for leaving her in Rome "alone, at the time of the flood, in the house of Cinzia. He seemed grieved and excused himself by saying that he had been sorry for it, and that he had thought to return sooner." He spoke to Plautilla of her mother, Giovanna, who had remained at La Petrella. He asked if she wished to go to see her mother again. Incidentally, there was good news of the mother. Then, taking leave of the host, he went with Plautilla to the Borghese house;[1] where he again saw his other sister, Settimia.

1 Plautilla related that she remained with Olimpio to eat and sleep in the Alessandri house; but she is far from accurate, as we are to see, in her account of Olimpio's journey to Anticoli.

How long did Olimpio remain at Anticoli? Plautilla says only one night and day, but she is in error. Antonia says two or three days; Papirio, three or four; Messer Alessandri, five or six. Perhaps Papirio, who strikes the average, is nearest the truth. His statement proves at least that Olimpio remained there several days: "While he was in the Michele house, I would bring him food and drink; and once also I remained to eat with them."

On the evening before leaving Anticoli, Olimpio returned to bid farewell to Messer Alessandri, who was still bed-ridden. Olimpio said "that he wished to go toward Abruzzo, that is to those regions where he had already been once; but he was not decided where he ought to go; he knew not where he might finally arrive, for he was still in doubt about the Kingdom of Naples."

According to Papirio, this was the one occasion during Olimpio's stay in Anticoli that he left Michele's house, where he lay hidden.

He must then have quitted Anticoli on March 16 or 17. He left before dawn, riding his horse. He was accompanied to the gate of the village by Papirio, acting on Plautilla's request. He did not say whither he would go; but Papirio observed that he took the Subiaco road. For some time the clatter of the horse's hoofs was audible; then all was still. The dawn was breaking.

Olimpio did in fact take the Subiaco road, but he continued beyond Subiaco through Arsoli, Orvinio, Poggio Mojano and Rieti, and on toward Piediluco. It was a journey over mountains and through valleys, long and wearisome. With the necessary halts, it assuredly did not last less than three days. The fugitive was making for Piediluco because there, or in Terni, near by, he would find some one of the Bussone family; perhaps Cesare, Giacomo Cenci's factor, or Giacomo's body-servant Pacifico, the one who had accompanied Olimpio and Rosati to Florence and had returned thence to Rome with the mare. Indeed, Olimpio had learned from Cesare Cenci that when Pacifico had come to the Piazza

Piedilucco

Giudea he had abandoned the mare, through fear of being arrested, and had fled from Rome. Olimpio assumed therefore that Pacifico had returned to his own country; he was not mistaken.

He arrived on the evening of March 20th at the Piediluco inn, a little less than two kilometres from the village. It stood at the junction of the Rieti road and the Arrone road; a truly strategic post for a hostelry, for there the wayfarers and carriers coming from Piediluco met those descending from the valleys of the Velino and the Nera. Olimpio stopped to eat and sleep in the inn. In the morning he rose and left so hurriedly that he even forgot "a pair of yarn stockings."

Soon after he arrived at Piediluco, and sought Onofrio di Giovanni Miranda, called Matteuccio, uncle of Cesare and Pacifico Bussone. He asked whether by chance Pacifico was there, or where he might be found. Onofrio replied that he was at Terni. He joined Olimpio; together they went down to that town. As they were passing by the toll-house at Porta San Paolo, Onofrio perceived in a pork-butcher's shop Marco Tullio Bartoli. This man had married Pacifico's sister, Cortifica, and had come down out of the hills to dwell in this lower country. He was a man of some thirty-five years, of no very good repute, full of arrogance, and of sinister aspect, especially on account of the singular livid hue of his flesh, his black beard and long moustaches. He wore a black cap, a white doublet and jerkin. Onofrio called him, and told him to put on his cloak and join him. Marco Tullio did not yet know Olimpio; he asked Onofrio who his companion was; Onofrio replied that he was a friend of Pacifico. Together the three went to inquire for Pacifico at the house of a certain Virginia, aunt of Pacifico on the father's side. Pacifico was called; he put his head out of a window, and seeing Olimpio, whom he perhaps thought dead or far away, "he turned all red like fire." At this Marco Tullio's suspicions were aroused. Nevertheless Pacifico descended; the party strolled through the town, conversing. Olimpio said at first that

he intended to go to Fara to find a friend of his, Captain Ottavio. He proposed that Pacifico should accompany him; but when the young man refused to leave Terni, Olimpio said that after all he too would remain there if he could find a safe place.

They returned together to the house of Virginia and dined. After this Onofrio, Pacifico and Olimpio went to sleep in the house of Marco Tullio. From odds and ends of talk the last-named by now had a pretty good idea of the identity of his unknown guest and realised that he was a fugitive. Notwithstanding their attempt to assure him that Olimpio's affairs had been "arranged" Marco Tullio still complained that he had been trapped. "I cried out against this man [Onofrio], telling him that he ought not to have brought to my house a fellow who was a bandit to bring about my ruin." It should be noted that Tullio's house was much exposed to all eyes. It stood near the Church of Santa Croce, or on that much frequented street which leads from Porta Sant' Angelo (to-day the Porta Cavour) to the Piazza.

In the morning they returned to Piediluco to seek a refuge. They searched all the rest of the day, but in vain. On returning in the evening they shortened their journey by crossing the lake in a boat, in which was also put Olimpio's horse.[1] Properzio di Nicola, the boatman who ferried them over, said that the party consisted of Onofrio, a relative of his, "a young, beardless boy of Terni" whose name he did not know, though he knew him by sight, and "a biggish man, though of no great height, with a black hat, a doublet of striped cloth, black-bearded, dark-faced; he was a well-proportioned man." Properzio described the horse as "not very fat; I judged it was a carriage-horse, though it had a saddle on." The words indicate that Bernardo Cenci's horse had suffered, after so many days' hard riding over the mountains, ill-fed and uncared-for.

[1] It was perhaps through failure of memory that Properzio di Nicola said that he ferried them to Piediluco, whereas in fact he ferried them in the evening from Piediluco to the opposite landing.

In the evening they came again to Marco Tullio's house. He lodged them again, but on condition that on the next day they would be gone for good. It was he who sent them to a farm of the Monastery of San Giovanni, outside the gate bearing the same name, and situated beyond the Serra torrent. There they took up their residence, and there for a time we shall leave them.

Marco Tullio's only promise to Olimpio was that he would return to Cesare Cenci in Rome the horse Cesare had provided. Olimpio required, however, that his own mare should be restored, or, in case the mare were not found, 50 scudi as compensation. Marco Tullio undertook the task; he brought the horse to the home of his kinsman, Cesare Bussone, in Rome. The two then went to the Convent of La Minerva to perform Olimpio's mission to Fra' Pietro. The latter says: "I went to call upon Signor Cesare Cenci, and I told him that the horse was returned, and a man had brought it back, I would not say who; and this man had said that Olimpio wanted his mare back or 50 scudi." But further search for the mare seemed useless. Signor Cesare had made all possible enquiries without result. He replied, therefore, as Fra's Pietro reports it, "that he would have the money given me by Signora Lodovica, and pressed me to know where his own horse was. I told him that I did not know, but it was at an inn. Then Signor Cesare went in search, and obtained the horse, so Signor Cesare told me. Then I presented myself to Signora Lodovica and craved the money of her, and she gave me 40 scudi . . . in a bundle; she did not count them out to me, but said that there were forty scudi there in testoni and giuli, and I put them, so tied up, in my bosom; and she told me likewise to say no word of it, for she would have me beaten if I should tell of it. And when she gave them to me there was no one present. Then I came back to La Minerva . . . and I found Marco Tullio awaiting me, and I gave him those forty scudi wrapped up in the same bundle without counting them, as Signora Lodovica had given them to me, and I said to him: 'Here; take these

to Olimpio.' And I gave them to him in the church, and told him that I had gone to get that money from the Cenci nobles."

From that time Fra' Pietro went often to the Cenci palace, not merely to ask or receive money for Olimpio or for the unhappy Plautilla. He had been there once before to bring the relic of St. Vincent to the dying Paolo, and also to see Vittoria. "I went once in the [Holy] Week . . . and I spoke with her and also with Signora Lodovica, to whose care I commended her." He went there again with Papirio and Michele Borghese. "Those two and I also spoke with the girl and also with Signora Lodovica. . . . I have gone four or five times to see the little girl. I went in company with another friar . . . one Rabito called Fra' Desiderio of Vicenza . . . and another time I went there with Maestro Paolo Pechi, Secretary to the Congregation of the Index," who also lived in the Monastery of La Minerva.

CHAPTER XX

THE CASTEL SANT' ANGELO

Olimpio's passage through Rome and Anticoli and his appearance in Terni were known to Lodovica and Guerra; vague reports of it came to the ears of the Cenci in Castel Sant' Angelo. All were disturbed at the news, though their feelings differed.

Plautilla, who had seen her husband going forth "undone" into the night, unceasingly urged Messer Alessandri to ask news of him from Fra' Pietro. She besought him also to keep her informed as to the progress of the Cenci trial. Alessandri tells us that he wrote many times, after Easter, April 11; but he never received any answer.

The unfortunate friar was being assailed on many sides. Eusebio Calvi, father of Catalano's wife, Porzia, appeared at La Minerva; he too inquired about Olimpio. He wished to know his whereabouts. The friar professed not to know. The other uttered threats; his intentions clearly boded ill, for he began to shout that he wished to find Olimpio at all costs, he was the man who had dragged Marzio, his son-in-law, into crime and ruin! Eusebio knew that Marzio had confessed everything.

On the other hand, certain women brought money to Fra' Pietro from the Cenci and the ladies, that he might "have prayers and masses said" for these poor prisoners. So said Fra' Pietro; but failed to state that the women brought him messages and questions too. For one cannot conceive how much confusion, indiscipline and irregularity reigned among the prison staff at Castel Sant' Angelo. People entered to talk to the prisoners; the prisoners' servants could leave at will; guards would deliver messages; soldiers would carry letters. As we know, Giuseppe, the cook of the vice-castellan Amerigo

Capponi, was in the habit of bringing letters from Giacomo to Abate Caetano. Cesare Bussone (formerly Cristoforo's servant) performed the same service when he brought food to Giacomo and the ladies.

Among the soldiers at the Castle was one Carlo of Bertinoro. He had once been a servant of the Cenci—as who had not been?—now, besides doing duty as their guard in the Castello, he seems to have re-entered their service, and even lent them money.[1] Fra' Pietro describes him thus: "He is not very tall, but of medium stature; he has a blond beard, rather long; he may be about thirty-five years old. . . . He is dressed in black, with jerkin and neck-piece of *cenicotte;*[2] he wears hat, cloak, sword and dagger."

Another soldier "of middle age," a certain Ascanio Massi of Sant' Elpidio al Mare, was especially assigned to the service of Lucrezia and apparently also to that of Beatrice. He would shut one eye to the actions of the ladies, though charged to guard them closely. And if any one approached to speak to them, he would shut both eyes!

It is hardly surprising that the gaolers should act in such a manner when the vice-castellan, our friend Amerigo Capponi, the hero of the floods, not only overlooked their conduct, but did not hide his own sympathy for Beatrice. In fact, so noticeable was his attitude as to give rise to all sorts of rumours. He meant to help her to escape, it was whispered—marry her, even.

Carlo of Bertinoro went at the ladies' order to ask Fra' Pietro if he knew the whereabouts of Olimpio. He went so often as to become an annoyance. It was useless for the poor friar to answer that he did not know. The soldier would only return afresh, for the two women were in terror lest Calvetti should be captured as well as Marzio. One such incident, among others, is thus related by the monk: "He brought me a note from Signora Beatrice, and

[1] This will be seen in Beatrice's will, August 27, 1599; also in the minutes of the Company of St. John the Beheaded.

[2] The word baffles the author, as it does the translator.—*Trans.*

told me to read it and write on that same note where Olimpio was. And because I cannot read, I took it in my hand to have it read, and he said to me: 'The signora told me that she wished me to bring it back to her. So read it you and give it back to me.' And I restored it to him and he went off again with it. Then this Carlo brought me messages from the ladies and Signor Giacomo, that I should save Olimpio and send him far off; and he told me this many times. . . . I did not know this Carlo at first, but he came to see me and told me that he was a friend of Olimpio, for he had been a house servant of the Cenci gentlemen, and that when they had been at La Petrella, he had been there too with Olimpio, and they were great friends."

Carlo da Bertinoro would also go to talk with Lodovica. He would hold long conversations with her, now in her room, now "in the hall, where he would stand talking with her for a time very softly."

One day Fra' Pietro plucked up courage and went with a plausible pretext to Castel Sant' Angelo. He asked for Amerigo Capponi, vice-castellan, and found him in the upper court, called to-day the "Racquet Court." He said that he knew the vice-castellan's brother, Girolamo, a Dominican like himself, and had had the timely thought to bring some good news of him. "On this occasion I asked after the Cenci gentlefolk who were imprisoned there, and I told him that they had had me say prayers for them, and sent me alms; and that I had it in mind to have masses said for them. Then he told me that they were well and they would soon be set free." Fra' Pietro then hinted that he would be much pleased to visit the Castello, but this request was not granted so easily. Yet it was not long before a soldier came to seek him in the sacristy of the Church of La Minerva. "He was a small man with a black cape . . . and he had a white beard and wore a sword, and he himself told me that he was a sergeant-lieutenant of the Castello."

The soldier brought word from the vice-castellan that

if he wished to see the Castello, he should do so at once, "for now was the time."

The friar paid his visit two days later, a little after mid-April, in spite of bad weather. He went with his inseparable companion Fra' Desiderio. He was brought into the hall, and announced by the pages. Capponi summoned him to his own room and, after greeting him, asked him how it happened that he had chosen a rainy day to come to the Castello. Fra' Pietro answered that he could not quit the monastery when he wished; he had therefore taken advantage of his first moment of freedom to pay his visit.

Capponi said that he had received news of his brother, the Dominican. Then, says Fra' Pietro, "he began to touch on whether I was brother to Olimpio, and where Olimpio was, and I said to him: 'I know not, Signore; and did I know it, I would not say; and if Pope Clement should make me Cardinal and bid me tell him where Olimpio is, I would not tell it him.' Then he said to me and urgently dwelt on it, that if he were near by I should warn him to go far away, for if he fell into the hands of the law it would be the ruin of the Cenci ladies . . . as it was, the case would soon end and no more be heard of it." Capponi confessed that he spoke in the name of the ladies as well. "And when this talk was done, he had wine brought for me and Fra' Desiderio, my companion; and he had a little fresh fennel and bread brought forth; it was on a silver platter; and when we had drunk, he warned me that I should repeat to no one these words he had spoken to me concerning Olimpio. I told him that I would not say a word."

Then the friar, still accompanied by Fra' Desiderio, visited the Castello under the guidance of a page. They returned to the "cortile delle palle"; Fra' Pietro thanked his conductor and was preparing to take his departure, when he heard a call from the iron-barred window near the little chapel built in the style of Michelangelo.[1] "I

[1] General Mariano Borgatti, the profound student of the Castel Sant' Angelo and its history, thinks that Lucrezia might have re-

was going down, when I heard some one signalling to me, going—*tss!—tss!* and I turned around and saw at the window by the chapel, which was barred, a woman's head inside; and she made signs to me with her head that I should come nearer. And I did so, and approaching the barred window, I found that it was Signora Lucrezia, wife of Signor Francesco Cenci; I had made her acquaintance in the house of Signor Giacomo Cenci. And she said to me: 'What word is there of Olimpio?' I answered: 'I know not where he is.' And she replied: 'Send him far away, for the love of God, for if he should be taken it would be our ruin.' I said: '. . . I think he is far away.' And then she said to me: 'Go away, go away; let no one see you!' " Fra' Desiderio was standing within earshot, a few steps away.

Lucrezia herself confessed that from her prison "she could see the courtyard, and saw the people passing through it."

Cesare, the uncle, had recourse to still other persons, to gain favour for the Cenci. Protesting their innocence, he again begged the protection of the Grand Duke, and Monsignor Guerra. Giacomo spoke of Guerra, and not without irony, on the eve of the final disaster. He said that Guerra assured him, through Giuseppe, Capponi's cook, "that he would aid them mightily, and they need

mained provisionally in the bare, chill Hall of Justice; perhaps also she was in some room formed by partitions in the so-called Hall of Apollo, which was separated into various sections then as later. Lucrezia says that she went to sit "in the iron-barred window" (therefore one of the high windows) above the courtyard and near the chapel. We have various indications of persons of importance who were kept in rooms of the Castel Sant' Angelo, outside the common cells. Let us note Vittoria Accoramboni, who was allowed further to walk about the castle (See Gnoli, p. 129), and Cagliostro, who was later locked in the very ornate rooms of the loggia of Paul III. See Borgatti: *Castel Sant' Angelo* (Rome, 1911) Vialardo, on the 24 September 1599, writes that he found Bernardo Cenci "in a bedroom with privilege of walking in the courtyard." Finally it is to be noted that Cesare Bussone, who brought food to the Cenci in the Castello, says that they would speak to him "from the windows of the rooms they were in." He noticeably does not use the word "cells," neither does Giacomo, who speaks of the "chamber" where he was kept.

have no fear, for he would have speech with Cardinal Montalto, Cardinal Camerino, and twenty other cardinals. And every day he would send to say: 'To-morrow ten cardinals will speak for you, to-morrow eight cardinals will speak!' and that we should have no fear, but make our minds easy. And every day he would send such-like words. Or, again he would send to say that he would show the world what a faithful servant of ours he was, and what services he would do for us, and that he would never abandon us." After a pause he continued, as if to proclaim his rights to the gratitude of Monsignor Guerra: "Signor Cristoforo Cenci, our grandfather, was the one who made the fortune of the father of Monsignore Guerra!"

Giacomo's words, spoken a little less than a month before his death, were unjust. Guerra was an arrant scoundrel, but he had not failed to make the utmost efforts to save his cousins; he even went so far as to bring about his own undoing. As proof of his energy a letter from Paolo which we have ourselves found in the secret Archives of the Vatican may be quoted. It was written by the good Cardinal Montalto to Cardinal Aldobrandino, and certainly refers to the Cenci affair. "Mons. Guerra will treat with Your Most Illustrious Lordship about a certain matter. I beg that you will deign to hearken to him willingly and to act amiably in his regard, as far as shall be possible, and I shall receive it as a very special favour." Below he added in his own hand: "I shall remain under most particular obligation to Your Most Illustrious Lordship for the protection that may be accorded in this business."

On March 9th Mario Fano was examined in Moscato's chambers. He admitted having paid fifty scudi to the Company of St. Omobono, or the Company of Tailors, to release Olimpio from the penalty imposed for murdering the innkeeper of Macel de' Corvi. The witness rented from the Cenci two properties in the Transteverina, outside the Porta San Pancrazio, for 2200 scudi a year. Of

this sum he had paid each month, while Francesco was living, one hundred scudi to Giacomo, eighty to Cristoforo, and eighty to Rocco, by order of the Rota and the Auditor of the Camera. From this rental, by arrangement with Orazio Pomella, he had paid Olimpio's release, as granted by the Governor of Rome. "The order, signed by the hands of the above-mentioned Giacomo and Bernardo, came directly to me; and I paid out fifty scudi . . . : I have restored the order to Tommaso." This was Tommaso, son of Federico de' Federici, deceased. He had been Giacomo Cenci's steward for a half year. He appeared in Moscato's house four days later to testify to the truth of these statements. He added that he had seen Giacomo and Bernardo sign the order in question. These two depositions were brief, and on subjects which had no longer much need of clarification.

On March 16 the judge interrogated the servant Giorgio upon the cassock and cloak of Signor Francesco. Witness believed that the black cassock which had been put on the body had remained in the hands of the arch-priest of La Petrella. He had seen it soaking in a brass wash-bowl on the very day of Cenci's death; and that night he had seen it "hanging on a hook in the castle . . . And later a boy came from the arch-priest to ask for it, and Signora Lucrezia said to me: 'Give it to him, I want to give it away for the love of God.'" He did not know what had become of the cloak; he then described it. Moscato then displayed it to him, and he identified it. "I have often seen him [Francesco] wearing it . . . and I have never seen any other cloak on his back."

This examination was likewise made in Moscato's house; so also was that of Porzia, on March 20th, concerning certain garments of her husband, including the famous cloak. Giunta was present. She said: "My husband Marzio has a black cape with a hood or cowl; this is in our house at La Petrella; it is of serge, and he bought it second hand, about a year ago, if I remember aright, from an

uncle of his named Paola d'Alfonso of La Petrella. He also had a cloak of mixed cloth which he had from Signora Beatrice at La Petrella after the death of Signor Francesco . . . and that is the cloak that Marzio wore when he was taken at Poggio Vittiano and was brought prisoner to Rome." She told finally how she had regained possession of the dress she was then wearing, the same one that Signor Francesco had held as a pledge.

Three days later (March 23d) Moscato, Giunta, and the notary went to the Cenci palace to question Lodovica. She stated that she had learned of Signor Francesca's death from Beatrice's letter, which she had not even read to the end: "I began to weep and would read no more." Her father-in-law had not at first treated her with utter disdain, although Giacomo had espoused her without his consent. Francesco had been wont to visit her; he had sometimes remained for a meal. His visits had become less frequent after he had married his second wife; they had ceased entirely after he had been in the Capitoline prisons. He had, besides, accused her husband at that time of attempting to poison him and "of getting him confined by the Governor." Lodovica then made reference to the quarrels between father and sons with regard to the maintenance allowances and the entail. "Thus it was needful to go to law."

When Beatrice's letter had arrived, Giacomo had shown it to his wife and said: "'I know not whether or not to go to La Petrella,' for Signora Beatrice wrote to him that he should fetch her away; and I said to him: 'I know not; do you decide.' And then he resolved to go." On his return he had confirmed Beatrice's message, that their father had fallen from the balcony.

Had she ever heard her husband complain that his father *dissipabat bona ipsius pro delictis et maxime quando composuit in scutis centum mille?* [1]

"Yes, sir. Giacomo complained to me about this settlement of the hundred thousand scudi which Signor Fran-

[1] "Was dissipating his wealth by his crimes, especially when he made the settlement for 100,000 scudi."

cesco made, and about his wasting of the property in this manner."

She ended with a lie. "Olimpio has never eaten at table with Signora Beatrice and me."

Fully ten days passed without interrogatories of any kind. Then on April 2d, in Tordinona, Molella presided at the fourth examination of Bernardo. He told of his journey to La Petrella with Giacomo and the others after the father's death. He described his father's costume: "My father was usually dressed in a pair of slashed black hose and a doublet of black satin, and boots of chamois-leather and in the house a cloth cap, but he wore a hat of black felt when he went forth." He then spoke of the cloak.

What had he and Paolo heard from Beatrice and Lucrezia regarding the plans to kill the father?

"Heaven forbid![2] Such a thing was never spoken of amongst us, either by Beatrice, Signora Lucrezia, my dead brother Paolo or myself."

He was asked for further information about his flight with Paolo from La Petrella and about the horses of the Cenci. There were five of these, he said: his own, a black, of which we have spoken at length, two roans, a bay and a gray. No one of them, he asserted, had ever been lent to Olimpio. Witness knew of the debt of 13,000 scudi, because Giacomo had spoken of it to him; he concluded: "What my brother Giacomo does, is honestly done." He was remanded to his prison in the Middle Tower, where he had been for three months, according to a record of inspection of April 4.

During the remainder of April only two examinations took place, both in the Castel Sant' Angelo. One was of Lucrezia on the 9th, the other of Beatrice on the 19th.

Lucrezia, interrogated on her husband's clothing, fol-

2 The picturesque expression used by Bernardo: "Guarda la gamba!" ("Look out for your leg!") referring to the danger of a bite from a dog, is untranslatable in English. See "Proverbi Italiani e Latini," by Francesco Lena (Bologna 1694) p. 302.

lowed her accustomed tactics of making senseless denials that injured her own case.

"I do not know if Francesco had several cassocks . . . for I did not concern myself with his clothes; Beatrice took care of them."

"But surely you remember the cloak of mixed cloth."

"I know naught, sir, for I gave no thought to his dress; Beatrice busied herself therewith . . . Perhaps he had such a cloak, perhaps not."

"But is it possible that you did not know if your husband had a cloak of mixed cloth?"

"It may be; it may be not."

"Did you never see a cloak with arm-holes, etc., etc.?"

"I have never seen a cloak of this description."

The famous cloak was produced. She examined it, and said: "It may be my husband had this cloak, and maybe not . . . I do not know; I took no care of his clothes; his daughter Beatrice took care of them."

Moscato lost patience. Let her make an end of her silly pose! They were not discussing underclothing which could not be seen; this was a garment which covered the others and was constantly visible. They were discussing, besides, a very unusual garment. Let her tell the truth, once and for all!

"What I have said is written down, and what is written down I have said."

She was threatened, but in vain. For the first time a wordy battle broke out between judge and prisoner. Stubborn to idiocy, she went so far as to say: "I have never seen this cloak on Signor Francesco." But even upon her dull wits it must have dawned at last that the lie committed her too far; she added: "Write this way! I know not if I have seen it or if I have not seen it, for I do not remember. It may be, it may be not."

She reiterated the words a sixth time. The angry Court rose and remanded Lucrezia to her prison.

Beatrice, on the other hand, in her examination of April 19th, opposed cautious denials to the judge's questions. She said: "The stuffs were in the chests in Pe-

trella Castle, and I had care of them; but any who wished might take them out, whether the linen or the garments, for I left the chests unlocked."

She stated that she did not know how many cassocks and cloaks her father possessed; but when the cloak given to Marzio was shown her, she said: "This belonged to my father; I have seen it many times on his back, at Petrella Castle and here in Rome."

"But how do you explain that this mantle, assuredly the property of Signor Francesco, as you yourself admit, later appeared on Catalano's shoulders?"

"The rogue must have stolen it! I should like well to know how he obtained it!"

"Explain yourself."

"When I say 'this rogue' I mean him from whom you have taken it . . . ; and he must surely be a rogue, for how would you that this cloak be come here, when it was at La Petrella? And since it was brought here it must well be that he took it at La Petrella,—that he stole it."

Beatrice understood very well that the Court was informed of her giving the cloak to Marzio. The judge had already put her the question in her examination of January 22d; and in her two confrontations with Catalano she had seen the cloak on his back. This repetition of the judge's question was an effort to take her off her guard; but Beatrice took refuge in a vague answer.

She was asked who had taken care of Francesco's possessions immediately after his death. We do not know what she answered nor how long the examination continued; for it is at this point in the trial record that the lacuna occurs which we have already lamented. The gap is not filled even by the Vatican *Summarium*. As we know, the existing portion of the trial-record is resumed in the last part of Giacomo's examination, undated, which deals with his journey to La Petrella accompanied by Bernardo after their father's death, with their actions there, and with those of Messer Attilio Ferretti. This last was called to the stand to confront him.

Before passing on to one of the most important occur-

rences of our history we may here note that the Fathers of San Silvestro del Quirinale and the Fathers of Jesus Crucified were in no wise resigned to awaiting the execution of Francesco Cenci's will. They followed the example of the Capuchins of St. Bonaventure, and nominated the maidens to be dowered with Signor Francesco's legacy.

Now, on April 29, we find Monsignor Ferdinando Taverna, Milanese, arriving in Rome. He was summoned by Clement to assume the charge of Governor of the City. He entered upon his functions on May 1. The fact should be remembered, for he will soon become a leading character in our story.

The Romans wondered at his youth; yet, though hardly forty, he had already shown his ability in the post of Collector in Portugal. The story was told at the time that immediately on his arrival he was brought into the presence of the Pope by Cardinal Aldobrandino. And the Cardinal whispered in Taverna's ear that Clement "was going to make a policeman of him." [1]

And such was the case, even though the anecdote be an invention.

[1] "Lo voleva fare sbirro."

CHAPTER XXI

THE DEATH OF OLIMPIO

New and dreadful developments were at hand.

We have seen that Giacomo's last counsel to his wife, when he was put under arrest, was that she should comply with any request of Monsignore Guerra, were he to demand horses or coaches or even "the whole house."

He, and the two women as well, repeated these orders constantly, even from the prison; and the orders were obeyed. Cesare Bussone tells the story: "Signor Giacomo, Signora Beatrice and Signora Lucrezia told me, there in the Castello, that I should always do whatever Monsignore Guerra might command me, and that I should not depart at all from his orders; and they told me this at the time I went to bring them food, from the windows of the rooms wherein they were. . . . I know also that messages often came from the Castello from Signor Giacomo and Signora Beatrice, and they went to Monsignore Guerra; and that soldier I spoke of carried them; and I have even seen Monsignore Guerra reading those messages."

He thus describes "that soldier": "He is of middle stature, about forty years old, dark-faced, clad in black, thin-faced, and black-bearded. It was not therefore Carlo of Bertinoro, who was "blond," nor the "sergeant or lieutenant" who came to Fra' Pietro, for this man "had a white beard" and was old. It was perhaps Ascanio Massi of Sant' Elpidio.

Bussone continues: "These Cenci gentlefolk trusted no one save Monsignore Guerra, and all of us house servants had orders from Signore Giacomo and Signora Beatrice to do whatever he commanded; and he disposed of the Cenci household as though it were his own.

We already know the moral character of Guerra, and we know of his relationship with the Cenci. He is described as of medium height, extremely fat, of pale complexion and red hair. What says the proverb:

> Woolly-haired dogs and red-haired men,
> Better be dead than friends with them![1]

At the time of our history he had passed his thirty-seventh year. He was wont to dress entirely in black, with cloak, hat, hose and stockings of silk, "an undercoat of cloth, and a doublet of camel's hair." As we have learned, he had no house; but, said he, "I dwelt in the house of Cardinal Montalto; there I kept my family."

As regards Olimpio, Lucrezia and Beatrice desired that Guerra should do nothing beyond arranging for Olimpio to go far away and remain out of reach. Beatrice had opposed the idea of murdering Catalano; all the more did she oppose the project of murdering the man who had given her moments of happiness, merely sensual though they were, and who was the father of her child. Lodovica also, learning from Bussone that Olimpio's murder was afoot, straightway warned Fra' Pietro that he should "send his brother far away."

But Giacomo hated Olimpio, as we know, and Monsignore Guerra concurred in this feeling. Guerra, further, reflected thus: "Olimpio is a babbler, and the life of the Cenci hangs on the confessions he might make. . . . Marzio Catalano, to be sure, has already confessed everything, yet his is but one man's word and against it stand the energetic protestations of the Cenci. But if Olimpio also should confess, they would be lost; and certainly if he is taken and put to torture, he will speak. To send him far away, as the ladies would wish, is therefore insufficient: the peril will always remain."

Guerra concurred heartily in the famous principle of the Visconti: "The only man who is not dangerous is a dead man." He held it necessary that Olimpio should be

[1] *"Uomo rosso e cane lanuto, più tosto morto che conosciuto."*

put out of the way. This was also the idea of Giacomo and of Marzio Colonna, who had attempted to put it into practice by having Rosati poison his ex-castellan. The plan had been excellent, but, as so often happens, its execution faulty. Guerra prepared his own criminal plot with diabolic skill; he made of it a masterpiece of iniquity. He succeeded in finding his assassins, and in ferreting out Olimpio; to track him through the Kingdom of Naples, he availed himself of the aid of the unhappy Fra' Pietro, who unwittingly drove his brother down the road to the shambles!

Let us survey the facts in all their atrocious details.

First the monsignore asked Pomella, the tailor, to use all diligence in discovering if Olimpio were really at Terni, as Marco Tullio Bartoli had suggested and as Cesare Bussone was whispering. It was especially important that this fact should be settled, for they could not put complete confidence in Marco Tullio, whom they knew but little, nor in Bussone, a man who told so many lies that even Signora Lodovica would not believe his word.

But Bussone gave such details as to induce Monsignore Guerra to entrust him with the honourable mission. Pomella was present when the monsignore spoke to Cesare and "gave him some silver for expenses (45 giuli) . . . and a horse of his own, a Frisian grey." When those who saw him preparing to leave asked him where he was going, he replied that as it was Easter, he purposed visiting the Seven Churches!

He quitted Rome on April 11, and travelling with all speed came to Terni; there he found Marco Tullio. "I told him that I had come there by order of Monsignore Guerra to learn of him if Olimpio were there in those regions. He told me that he had been there, but had gone to the Madonna of Loreto together with my brother, Pacifico, and that they would return within a few days; and so I made an agreement with Marco Tullio that he would inform me when they returned." Cesare Bussone set out again for Rome on April 13th.

Olimpio and Pacifico had indeed gone to Loreto, owing to the insistence of the former that he wished to commend his soul to the Virgin. Pacifico says: "Afterwards we returned to Terni at the dinner-hour, and as we entered into the Terni gate, I met a housemaid named Filomena, with another friend of hers by name Catterina, and we talked with them a while together; and afterwards we came to the house, but I did not find my cousin Marco [Tullio] there. I sent his little son after him, and he came, and when he saw us he began to shout aloud, making a great noise." He was unwilling to have Olimpio return to his house, for fear of exposing himself to all manner of misfortunes; but it seems he did in fact give the fugitive shelter for some four or five days. He then packed off Olimpio and Pacifico to the San Giovanni farm; then he got them lodging in the house of a priest, Don Cristoforo, in the high country to the north of Terni, beyond the Monte d'Oro, called the Piedimonte hills. Finally, as though to have Olimpio the handier for his imminent fate, Marco Tullio hid him in a cottage near the Porta Sant' Angelo.

Cesare Bussone attempts to give the impression, without however stating it in so many words, that he did not mention Guerra's iniquitous proposal to Marco Tullio on his first visit to Terni. This proposal was, that if Cesare should kill Olimpio, Guerra would have the Cenci pay him one hundred scudi immediately on their release; while if Olimpio should be slain outside the Papal States, in the Kingdom of Naples, the slayer would not only be quit of any penalty, but would also receive a State bounty. These scudi and this bounty would be a godsend to him, "who was a poor man and had a wife and children." But a significant fact proves that Cesare did not confine himself at the time to inquiring whether Olimpio was at Terni but laid the foundation for the crime, in collusion with Marco Tullio, who was also to receive one hundred scudi—though always on condition the Cenci should be released from prison! The fact is this: Marco Tullio had pledged himself to send news to Guerra just as soon as

View of Terni, 17th Century

Olimpio should return from Loreto with Pacifico. But instead he delayed several days. He spent this time in assuring himself, before entering upon so dangerous an enterprise, that the ban on Olimpio by the Royal Courts actually existed. Further, he wrote to Cesare, and, without even referring to Olimpio's return to Terni, asked Cesare "to inform himself whether this Olimpio was truly under ban." The letter was brought to Rome by a certain Janni Stefano Nuculo, also of Terni; he returned with Cesare's answer that Olimpio should certainly be considered as "under ban, but he had not learned the matter with certainty." While Monsignore Guerra was taking steps to procure the document, a friend of Marco Tullio, one Giovan Battista of Teramo in Abruzzo, happened to visit Terni. Marco Tullio hastened to ask him if he knew whether Olimpio was an outlaw. The other replied that he did not know; but promised that as soon as he returned to his own village he would not fail to learn the facts and to send them in writing. Several days later Marco Tullio did indeed receive a letter from him, enclosing a memorandum of Captain Domenico Antonio de Sanctis stating that he would reward whosoever would bring Olimpio into the Kingdom and take his life. The friend from Teramo added in his letter that the blood-money would be two hundred scudi, and that, if this "service to the kingdom" were done, the slain man's head should be brought to Cittaducale to the Captain's marshal. The memorandum read:

"Philippus dei Gratia Rex

"Carolus Gambecurte, Viceroy of the Mark of Celenza.

"Marco Tullio, Cesare and Pacifico of Terni, being engaged upon executing and performing a service to the Kingdom at . . . and it being of import that they have in their hands alive or dead Olimpio Calvetti, Roman, a public delinquent: we have therefore made this present by which we order and enjoin upon all officials that they give every aid and favour in the execution of the aforementioned service: and when the aforesaid person is taken dead or alive into their hands they are to bring him to us with diligence; and let no man oppose

them as he holds dear the royal favour and under pain of 1000 ducats forfeit.

"*Datum Campanie*, 25 April 1599.

"Captain Marco Antonio D. Sanctis."

Marco Tullio meanwhile was taking good care of Olimpio. He was keeping him, not in his own house, but near by, like a fish in a tank, to be netted at his own good time. He was now sure of his facts and dwelling fondly on the rosy prospect of receiving one hundred scudi from Rome and two hundred from Naples, not to speak of an official diploma of merit. He therefore informed Cesare that Olimpio had returned from Loreto, and this by the following tortuous means.

He sent a letter to Fra' Pietro by an "angarano," or postillion, a certain Barbieri, who dwelt in the piazza Capranica, not far from the Minerva. Cesare Bussone was first informed of the letter. He charged his brother, Agabito, a shoemaker, to go for it. Cesare himself then brought the missive to Fra' Pietro, who unsealed it, opened it, and spread it out. But the poor friar declared that he must be allowed to ponder a little upon the reply. The fact is he wanted time because, being illiterate, he was obliged to wait till some one should read it to him.

Marco Tullio's letter merely informed the friar that Olimpio was well, and that he was at Terni in a place which he indicated very exactly. Fra' Pietro seems not to have had this information previously; it was his first chance to send some news of the fugitive to his kinsmen in Anticoli. Bussone then went directly to Monsignore Guerra. "I returned to Monsignore," he said, "to tell him that the letter from Terni had come, and that I had given it to the friar, and the friar had told me to return that evening. So Monsignore said to me: 'Tell this friar to come and speak to me, for I would talk with him, and do you come back here to me, for I wish to send you again to Terni.' And I told him I would do all he had commanded me; . . . and so I went anew to the friar and

said that Monsignore Guerra wished to speak to him. Then the friar asked me where he was, and I said, in the Montalto palace, and he should go there and he would be shown to Monsignore's quarters . . . and all this was at La Minerva. . . . Later I met him in Monsignore Guerra's rooms in the palace; . . . I started to enter therein. I raised the door-curtain, and there was the friar within; so I lingered outside until the friar came forth." There was "another stranger" in Monsignore's room; Cesare did not recognise him.

Monsignore Guerra intimated to the miserable friar, with an air of mystery, that Olimpio was no longer in safety at Terni; he might be captured at any moment, for the law had learned of his hiding-place. It was therefore necessary that Fra' Pietro write him to depart forthwith and to put himself in security. Fra' Pietro promised to write; it was settled that Cesare Bussone would come to La Minerva the same evening to get the letter.

When Bussone came there, he found the friar resolved "not to do it." He could not write himself; while to have recourse to an amanuensis would reveal Olimpio's hiding-place. Cesare insisted, but vainly. The friar charged him merely to communicate to Olimpio his advice that he should return to Anticoli. There Fra' Pietro would join Olimpio, bringing him his mare, which had finally been found. There also was his kinsman, Giovanni Francesco Alessandri, who was eager to hide and protect him. The message was not all that the conspirators desired, but the details should convince Olimpio that it actually came from his brother. It was at any rate Guerra's opinion that Olimpio would make no resistance, but would journey again to Anticoli, thus entering the Kingdom near Cantalice.

On Thursday evening, May 13th, Cesare Bussone went to Guerra to obtain equipment for his journey; that is, a horse and some little supply of money.

"Monsignore Guerra gave him several gold scudi," deposed Orazio Pomella; "and I was likewise present, when the Monsignore spoke with Cesare in his same rooms in

Cardinal Montalto's house, and told him that he must needs return anew to see the aforesaid Olimpio and Marco Tullio. . . . He cast the golden scudi on the table, and Cesare took them; it seemed to me there were four or five. And Monsignore sent for a horse to several places, and in particular I remember that he asked for Cospa, the white mare in the Cardinal's stable, and the servants answered that the Marchese [1] had taken her to Mentana; and finally a servant came and whistled from the courtyard and said: 'I have found the mount; here it is.' And other men-servants heard the whistle and informed Monsignore that the horse had come; and so Cesare departed."

Cesare says specifically that the mount was a dappled white mare, and that he received four gold scudi. He set forth at about dawn on May 14th.

"I was alone; but on the way I joined other travellers, now one, now another. The first evening I came to Borghetto and I met a one-eyed man who was journeying on horseback. I dined with him that evening at Borghetto, and later I left him at Terni. He was a gentleman of Cardinal Pallotta's.[2]

"The second day (May 15th) I came to Terni, and lodged at my house with my sister Pacifica, who is the wife of Marco Tullio Bartolo. He dwells at Santa Croce, near the piazza di Terni, and is a farmer. And I ate there that evening with Marco Tullio and his wife."

But before sitting down to meat with his sister, Cesare Bussone had seen well to his own business. Immediately on arriving at Terni he had sought out his kinsman; and with Pacifico, the three had laid their plans for the crime. Then all had gone together to Olimpio's new hiding-place without the Porta Sant' Angelo.

Cesare, on seeing Olimpio, made immediate use of Fra' Pietro's message, magnifying its importance. He had, he said, made a frantic journey from Rome to bring the

[1] Peretti.

[2] Giovanni Evangelista Pallotta, born at Caldarola in 1548, made Cardinal by Sixtus V in 1587, and died in 1620.

warning, for it had become known at Rome where Olimpio was hiding. It was needful that he should flee, and return to Anticoli, where Giovan Francesco Alessandri, on an understanding with Fra' Pietro, was ready to succour and conceal him. Cesare, Marco Tullio and Pacifico would bear him company even within the borders of the Kingdom, to protect him in case of attack by the *sbirri!*

Olimpio conceived the thought that his persecution was directed by Marzio Colonna. If Camillo Rosati had attempted to poison him, the commission had come not so much from Giacomo Cenci as from Colonna, Camillo's master. Further, had not Querco, who had begun the first inquiry into Signor Francesco's death at La Petrella, been sent by Colonna? Olimpio stormed and cursed at his lord. As soon as he should arrive in the area of Cantalice "he would set out for the open country with a band of stout fellows." We know indeed that he was a good friend of Domenico Scutorusso and that he had once journeyed with his band. He said that at his call men would come from all sides, from Spoleto, from Cantalice, and other places. More, he cried, with his accustomed bluster, that he had already given them the call to assemble and burn all Colonna's grain-storehouses in the Cícolano.

The others let his anger burn itself out. Afterwards he collected himself and said that he would set forth early the following morning, retracing the path he had taken two months previously, and return to Anticoli Campagna.

Marco Tullio, on his return home, purchased "a small hatchet, for he could carry no other weapon without rousing the suspicions of Olimpio."

The sinister band left Terni on May 16th, before day. It was composed of Marco Tullio Bartoli, Cesare and Pacifico Bussone and Olimpio. Francesco's murderer rode the dappled white horse which Monsignore Guerra had procured for Cesare. The others were on foot. Dawn was breaking as they passed below Papigno.

Olimpio was completely unarmed. He was dressed as

follows: He wore the well-known doublet of cloth with black stripes, and a black collar trimmed with lace, also black. The shirt was visible at the neck, the collar "in the French style," that is, "smooth with lace trimmings." The same lace ornamented the shirt-cuffs. The trunk-hose were "in the mode of Seville," ample at the thighs and narrow at the knee. They were of "wool and cotton of a nondescript colour not far from black"; the stockings were of wool dyed a tawny colour; the underclothing was of cotton. His boots, double-soled, bore the marks of spurs, though he wore none on that day. One boot had its upper slashed to ease a bruise upon the foot. His leggings were of sheepskin. Finally his hat, of black felt, was adorned with some images of the Madonna di Loreto, which he had placed there on his visit to the famous shrine.

Cesare Bussone purposed to tell the story, on his return to Rome, that he too had been to Loreto. He had also sewn in his own hat an image, obtained from Pacifico, who, as we know, had gone to the shrine with Olimpio.

Olimpio also carried two packed saddle-bags. "But," said Cesare, "I know not what things were in them."

Cesare, for his part, wore hose of wool and cotton, "a jerkin of black cordovan leather, and a doublet of striped cloth." Pacifico wore "a saffron doublet."

Coming near Piediluco early in the morning, Olimpio dismounted and turned his horse over to Marco Tullio. He wished to enter the village on foot with Cesare and Pacifico, not to appear too conspicuous. They entered, preceding Bartoli, through the Porta del Carpine, the northern gate to the side of the Castel del Lago. The gate is now called Porta Ternana; it has been allowed to fall to ruin, as it was too narrow. Only a single shaft remains.

The village lies on the shore of the lake which has taken its name, and at the foot of a lovely conical mountain, crowned by a castle. The two lines of walls which once protected the town climb the steep slope, converging toward the castle. The settlement, clustering on the beak-like projection of the mountain, forms an obtuse angle

above the lake. It mirrors itself tranquilly in those placid waters, whose silence is only broken when some one on the opposite bank intones in a great voice the first line of the Divina Commedia, to awaken the famous echo which repeats eleven syllables.

To-day the lake is bordered by a wide road, undreamed-of at the time of our history. At that period the main street of the village was higher up the hill: the foreshore was hemmed in by the backs of houses and some small gardens flanked by low walls. The principal street passed through the centre of the village, from the Porta del Carpine to the Porta di Porto Piano, now the Porta Reatina, consisting of a crumbling breach in the eastern walls.

When the carriage road along the lake was laid out, this old central way, antique and dilapidated, became in great part useless: it has been blocked up and obliterated in many places by little hovels. On the other hand, some small houses that were built against the wall of the Church of San Francisco were torn down; upon their site a broad flight of steps was constructed which descends to the new road with a rather stately effect.

The church of San Francisco, whose holy-water font is the hollowed capital of a Roman pillar, has a single nave. Its roof is supported on great pointed arches. Behind the altar are some niches, with Umbro-Roman frescoes in the style of Antonazzo: others, more recent, suggest Giannicola. Above the altar of Sant' Antonio of Padua was once a painting which represented the saint preaching to the fishes. This niche is now quite disfigured and occupied by a modern statue.

For our purpose, one more detail must be added to this description of Piediluco. Another street runs at a higher level than the one just described. It is called the Street of Santa Maria, for it skirts a church with that title. And even higher runs an alley which affords a shorter path between the two gates for those who are not averse to climbing. The view from this steep alley, where it ascends above the church, is an enchantment! The beautiful campanile with its graceful mullioned windows stands

out against the ever-changing hues of the lake. Gladly would we linger on these heights, were we not obliged to follow on the track of our bravoes and their victim!

They have come with all speed to the house of some cousins of the Bussone, named Montani. This was also called the house of "Querino's sons," since one Querino had espoused a sister of the Bussones' mother. Olimpio halted there, and was well received by Gian Battista, Alessandro and Drusilla Montani, merely because he was in the company of their relatives. They did not yet know Olimpio's identity. Shortly after, Marco Tullio also arrived, with the mare. Then Marco Tullio, Cesare and Pacifico went out in search of their uncle, Onofrio di Giovanni Miranda, or Matteuccio. They found him and revealed to him the purpose of their journey, as later they revealed it to their cousin, Gian Battista.

Onofrio then came to greet the guest, whom, as we have learned, he already knew very well.

All ate together in the Montani house. Then Olimpio, being weary, went to rest. In the afternoon they threw dice; the stake was that the loser should buy fish from the lake, which they would eat together for supper. Olimpio lost, and set forth in search of fish. But it was Sunday, and on that day no one was fishing, nor selling nor eating fish. Olimpio asked various people; a certain Pier Simone answered him with the proverb that he would find the fish "listening to Saint Anthony"; he alluded to the painting of which we have just spoken.

The party continued to idle about Piediluco; for the Podestà was absent, and the *sbirri* taking their ease in the tavern. Olimpio could remain there at peace, at least for that day. They strolled about the village; now lounging in front of the inn of Michele, called the Spaniard, son of Giovanni Francesco, deceased; now loitering on its cellar stairs; now chasing one another, laughing and joking, as several witnesses tell. But the assassins none the less were perfecting their plans.

The inhabitants of Piediluco took note of Olimpio, "a man of truly fine aspect." They asked who he was, but

no answer was given them. Many did not know the two Bussone, though others did; in any case, the pair made no mystery of their identity.

Toward evening all returned to the Montani house and supped. Afterwards Allessandro went to the stable to get the mare. He put on her the saddle and "various things"—perhaps Olimpio's saddle-bags—and led her in front of his house. It was "compline-hour," according to Drusilla Montani and Giovan Paolo di Bonifacio, who was public "porter," of Piediluco and fisherman at odd intervals. The sound of the bells from the two church towers was drifting over lake and valley when Olimpio mounted his horse and took his way alone through the darkness of the middle street toward the Porta di Porto Piano. Several people saw him; some of them, noticing that he was setting forth by night, surmised that he was a bandit. Francesco Mori, the butcher, thought "the fellow looked like a suspicious character."

Meanwhile Marco Tullio, Cesare, and Pacifico hastened along the hillside alley, and came to the Gate before the horseman. All four took the Cantalice road; Olimpio riding, the others on foot. Onofrio and the Montani also came to the Gate. With perfidious heartiness, they wished Olimpio "a good journey!"

The party halted at the Piediluco inn, at Olimpio's desire. He wished to ask for the stockings he had overlooked when he had stopped to sleep there two months before. But the host, Giovan Simone di Giovanni Orsini, told him that he had not found them. Olimpio then calling for drink, the host brought forth wine, but refused payment. The host's generous action would suggest that he had found the stockings and had kept them!

Olimpio, during the talk, asked the host the distance to Santa Susanna. On hearing that it was about five miles, he said: "We shall be there soon after nightfall."

Leaving the inn of Piediluco, the four continued through the mountains. Passing the gorge of the Colle di Labro and the Aia di Macchia, they reached the inn of Santa Susanna, at the springs of Santa Susanna, where

to-day stands the cottage called La Mola, at the third hour of night (about 11 P. M.).

On arriving they put the mare in the stable and, ascending to the gallery, seated themselves at a table. They did not wish to eat, having supped at Piediluco. They drank wine; then Marco Tullio asked directions from the host, Pietro Paolo Finuccio of Rivodutri, a village on the Fosso di Susanna. He inquired the distance to Cantalice. "None of them wished to sleep in a bed; all four were satisfied to sleep in the stable." And to the stable they descended, in the midst of hubbub, for it was Sunday, and the inn full of people. Cesare, who was very weary, first found a bed in a manger. Pacifico lay down beside him. Marco Tullio and Olimpio found a place at a little distance.

The inn of Santa Susanna, though not far from the Kingdom, was still in the Papal States; Lago Lungo marked the boundary. The three assassins would gladly have continued their journey that same evening, to perform their task out of hand and by night. But Olimpio desired to halt there, and it did not behoove them to awaken suspicions in one who had till then so trustfully fallen in with their plans.

"They left the following morning" [May 17th], said the host, "about two hours before day." He knew this "because they called to me to bring them the light. And I brought the light to the stable, and I found the big man with the white doublet [Olimpio] standing there. I gave him the light—it was an oil lamp—and then I returned within, and they went off."

From Santa Susanna toward Poggio Sant' Arcangelo the superb chain of mountains, dominated by the Terminillo, curves about an immense hollow. In the folds of the mountain-side lie Apoleggia, Poggio Bustone, Cantalice, Castelfranco.

The ill-omened company took the mule-track which still passes from San Liberato. They were at last in the Kingdom. They halted at the foot of the gorge or valley of Cantalice, on the eastern flank of which perches the

village, on a declivity so steep that it always seems its houses must some day go tumbling down the slope. The village is very beautiful, with its great black tower and its massive walls, to which the white façade and graceful campanile of San Felice to-day offer luminous contrast.

The inn, even in those days a closed and abandoned dwelling, stood below in the valley, in a lonesome spot far from the village, on the road which continues on through Villa Troiana and the Madonna del Passo to Rieti.

About noon of the same day, the 17th, the story sped up and down the valley that at the inn of Cantalice had been discovered the body of a well-dressed man; the head had been severed and had disappeared. It is needless to say that all Piediluco realised who the victim was, and also who were his assassins.

The boatman Properzio heard the story from a certain man of Terni "at the house by the lake-landing." On entering the village he had heard it again from the buzzing knots of inhabitants. Ottavio Petti, the fishmonger, stood in the doorway of his shop proclaiming his opinion loudly. The victim was the unknown gentleman who had passed the day before through Piediluco, and the band captained by Marco Tullio Bartoli had murdered him. Properzio, the boatman, was also sure of the fact.

Alessandro Titubardi, called Frullino, of Butrio, learned the news from "a fellow from Rieti"; he guessed the truth and immediately stated that the body must be that of the outlaw who had been in the Montani house. Such also was the opinion of the porter, Giovan Paolo di Bonifacio, after he had heard the tale from a man from Cantalice. The fisherman Tarquinio, son of Domenico, deceased, heard the story at the Carpine, outside of Piediluco, from a family originally from Rieti. He returned to the village at evening and found that his own opinion was shared by all. Some could not reconcile the fact that Cesare and Pacifico had returned about noon to Piediluco and had dared to show themselves coolly in the village. Others observed that this was perhaps an

ostentatious effort to make a show of innocence. Ottavio Petti said that they had reappeared in the house of the Montani, and that he himself had seen Pacifico near by, on the stair, and Cesare at the window. Giovan Paolo di Bonifacio asserted: "It was about the midday meal-hour" when Pacifico "was near my house, and he stopped to watch some dicers."

The inn-keeper of Santa Susanna deposed: "I heard from the passers-by that this dead man was found near the Cantalice inn, when the sun had risen. These people told me that the body was found headless, lying on the ground all dressed, and it had a striped doublet. . . . I straightway guessed . . . it to be that big man of fine aspect . . . who had lodged the evening before with three others in my inn, and I stood astounded, saying to those who told me they had seen him that I judged it to be that aforesaid person who had lodged for the night in my house." The grim band which had set out from Pietro Paolo Finuccio's inn to commit their dreadful crime must have deeply impressed mine host of Santa Susanna. He had been for three years proprietor of his inn; but at that precise time, on the 18th of May, he abandoned it to others.

The party, then, had left Santa Susanna two hours before day. Olimpio was riding; Cesare, Pacifico, and Marco Tullio were on foot. By dawn, they had come to the inn of Cantalice, called Carlucci's Inn. Here Marco Tullio, the devilish brains of the band, a worthy instrument of his patron, Guerra, suggested to Cesare that he should feign weariness. Olimpio, again trusting and compliant, offered to let Cesare ride behind himself. He drew rein. Then Pacifico, pretending to hold the horse steady so that his brother could mount, went to the horse's head and grasped the bridle so that it might not take to flight and bear Olimpio to safety. Cesare, meanwhile, was pretending to arrange his cloak on the horse's loins; when Olimpio turned and bent over to aid him, the vile Marco Tullio deftly brought down the hatchet on his head. The stroke did not bring Olimpio to the ground

at once; he succeeded in alighting on his feet and turned to defend himself. But Cesare and Pacifico were upon him like a flash and held his arms tight, while Marco Tullio continued to rain down blows on his head, even as he himself once had rained them on Francesco's! Olimpio writhed and twisted, kicked spasmodically, uttered a dreadful scream, then toppled and fell. He was still in his death agony when Marco Tullio began to sever his head from his body with a small knife.

When the ghastly task was finished, Pacifico and Cesare returned to Piediluco, as we have seen; while Marco Tullio mounted the white horse and set off for Rieti, with the head of Olimpio stuffed into one of his saddle-bags.

On arriving there, he stopped at the house of Domenico di Grifone Ranzetta, husband of Isabetta Bernabei. She was the daughter of a sister of Marco Tullio. Ranzetta was absent, but Isabetta showed herself at the window. Marco Tullio asked her if she had a stable where he could put his mare, which was overtired; he wished to let her rest. Yes, there was a stable; it was next to the store-room. He entered therein, set the saddle-bag containing the dead man's head on the ground, and led the steed to the crib. Giuseppe Bernabei, Isabetta's brother, happened in at that moment; he caught a glimpse of the head in the saddle-bag and started back in horror. Did Marco Tullio perceive this? Whether or no, he hid the saddle-bag in a basket in the store-room. He then returned to the street and told Isabetta that he was obliged to go immediately to Cittaducale, but as his own horse was too tired to continue, he would have to find another mount. Isabetta therefore sent for a certain Marziale Zuzza, who lived near by; he agreed to hire his livery-horse for three giuli. At this point Ranzetta appeared; Marco Tullio greeted him, and requested him to procure "two measures of barley to feed his mare."

Marco Tullio then set out again; but when he came to the Porta Arci the new horse balked; neither shouts, blows, nor kicks availed to make him proceed. Marco Tullio was not the man to lose time. He turned back, re-

stored the restive horse to its owner, and upon his own mare, weary and unrefreshed though she was, resumed his journey.

At Cittaducale he began to hunt for Ottavio Muccino of Popoli, ensign of the Company of Captain Domenico Antonio de Sanctis, Lieutenant of the Viceroy, the Marchese di Celenza. After some time Marco Tullio succeeded in discovering him in the church of Santa Maria. He told his story and displayed the document given him by Captain de Sanctis. The ensign complimented him on his gallant deed, and asked him where the head of Olimpio was to be found. On hearing that it was at Rieti, he summoned a soldier, a certain Donato Zoppe or Toppa, nicknamed Donatello, thirty years old, of Popoli. He ordered the soldier to mount his horse on the spot and to go with Marco Tullio to fetch the head. He then dismissed the pair, repeated his own satisfaction at the news, and promised that he would attend to the payment of the bounty.

When the two had come to Ranzetta's house in Rieti, Marco Tullio told his companion to wait for a moment in the street. He re-entered the stable and returned with a saddle-bag, saying in a low voice: "This is a head. Take it to the ensign Ottavio of the Company of Captain Domenico Antonio de Sanctis, for such has been our agreement." The soldier departed with his grim burden.

It appears that during Marco Tullio's absence Giuseppe Bernabei revealed the awful thing he had seen to his sister and brother-in-law. He affirmed this fact to the judge who examined him in Rieti. The Ranzetta couple denied the charge roundly, but it is easy to perceive that such an attitude was incumbent on them. Nevertheless, Domenico Ranzetta could not deny that he realised Marco Tullio had just committed some evil deed. He testified to the Lieutenant in Rieti: "Observing that he had come in haste, I suspected that he had done some wrong, and he replied to me that he had done no wrong at all." But later "he said that he had been caught in a quarrel at the Cantalice inn." This was when he was

at table with Isabetta, Domenico Ranzetta, his own brother Cristiano, his nephew Giuseppe and a certain Candeloro of Terni, a rag-collector through Rieti, who was a lodger in the house.

Domenico Ranzetta admitted that he had thought Marco Tullio to be the author of the crime discovered at Cantalice; but not until two days later, when news of the murder reached him. Now it is conceivable that he waited until his wife's uncle had again taken the Terni road before he spoke his thought; but assuredly he did not wait two days. The news of the murder had come to Rieti with all speed, before noon; in fact, the whole town had been full of the horrible details of the decapitated head. Isabetta herself deposed: "After Marco Tullio went away, my husband, Domenico, told me that my uncle had taken the head off the man who was found dead at the Cantalice inn; and I answered him: 'If he cut that head off, may his own be cut off no less.' "

Her statement proves that the dialogue took place very early, even were this not confirmed by the truthful Giuseppe: "Marco Tullio ate his noonday meal and said he had been in the business at the Cantalice inn; and my kinsman asked him if he had cut off the head, and he made no answer." He continued: "I have seen the basket, wherein my sister told me had been the head of the man my uncle, Marco Tullio, had done to death; and I took it in my hand and saw that there had been a little blood there."

In addition to these details, all agreed that Marco Tullio had eaten and drunk in haste and had set forth again toward Terni betimes, declaring "that certain companions were awaiting him and it was needful that he should make speed on his way."

He returned to Piediluco by the road which passes between the two lakes of Ripa Sottile and Lungo, thus avoiding the Cantalice road. Had he taken it, he would have again seen the corpse, which lay undisturbed for some time, to await an inquest on the scene of the crime by the Court of Cittaducale. Throngs of peasants had

come to see the wretched headless trunk abandoned in the roadway. They gathered from Cantalice, from Lisciano, Villa Troiana, Lugnano, San Liberato, Poggio Bustone, and Rieti. The assembly teemed with conjectures and various guesses as to the body's identity. Some began to search the stream and the folds of the mountain-side, thinking that the head had been thrown away or hidden in some near-by spot. Presently some began to say that the body might well be that of a man who had come the previous evening to the Santa Susanna inn with three men of Terni. The succession of sensation hunters continued all day long, thinning out only at evening. The body was left in its drear resting-place, "guarded" by a few people until the Cittaducale Court should take charge.

On the following morning (May 18th) arrived the Podestà of Rieti and the representatives of the Court. These were Francesco Sebastiano, assistant notary, the jail-warden, Silvestro, his aide, Orazio, and several *sbirri*. Others present were Giuseppe, a porter of Cittaducale, Biagio of Ocre, Valerio Gian Battista, householder, and Valerio di Giovan Marco, porter. The last three, inhabitants of Cantalice, were called upon to describe, as eyewitnesses, the appearance of the corpse.

They detailed the clothing, with which we are familiar; then they described the body. The flesh being firm and the skin white, the body seemed to them younger than Olimpio actually was at the time of his death. They estimated the dead man to have been between thirty and thirty-five years of age. He had no wound on his body.

After the under-notary had collected the various testimonies, Valerio di Gian Battista and Francesco Antonio clothed the headless corpse in its shirt and buried it in a hastily dug grave by the side of the road. Throwing earth upon it, they gathered stones and made of them a small cairn. Upon this they planted "a little cross of wood."

The officials then departed, carrying with them the re-

mainder of the clothes, "preserving them for the identification of the body."

Let us now return to the soldier Donato Zoppe, or Toppa, who brought Olimpio's head from Rieti to Cittaducale on May 17th. When he arrived, Muccino took the head from the saddle-bag and promptly declared it to be that "of the castellan of La Petrella." But to make the identification complete it was necessary to assemble sure and abundant attestations. To this end he took the ghastly relic and set out in the afternoon of the same day, the 17th, for Borghetto, to-day Borgo Velino. This village lies on the Velino stream, along the via Salaria, before one comes to Antrodoco. With Muccino were Donatello and other soldiers, including Amico di Cesare of Roccacasale near Popoli, Liberatore alias Combattello, etc. From Borghetto he wrote a letter to Giovan Vincenzo Lopes, and sent it to Borbona, a village on higher ground to the north, by the Ratto torrent. The letter follows: "I have been sent by Captain Domenico Antonio de Sanctis to these sections of Cittaducale and its environs to accomplish some work against the bandits. And as he informs me that when need arises to get any information I should make use of your person—for you have at various times served him intimately—and as I have no other trusty person in the king's service hereabout, therefore I beg you to come to me either in Micigliano or in the abbey of Santo Quirico. The business in hand is to identify the head of Olimpio Calvetti, public outlaw, presented to me by certain men of the States of the Church. Knowing that you will not fail me, I pray Heaven for your good health. Given at Borghetto, May 17th, 1599."

The meeting took place at the monastery of San Quirico, above Antrodoco. There the party assembled; the head was set on a table, and the declarations written down. Donatello first spoke: "This head standing on this table and which is now shown to me" was the head of Olimpio Calvetti; "for I have seen him many times and spoken with him while I was in garrison at the

village of La Petrella with the Company of Captain Domenico Antonio de Sanctis; and further I have often lodged there when passing through; and he was Castellan, and often have we consigned prisoners to him by order of that same Captain."

The next witness was Amico di Cesare, 27 years old, of Rocca dei Cesali, or, more briefly, merely I Casali, on the Colle Calvo, above the Ratto torrent, and not far from Montereale. He said: "This is the head of Olimpio Calvetti. . . . When I saw it yesterday—Donato de Toppa brought it to the Ensign Ottavio . . . I recognised it on the spot . . . for I have seen him many times, when I was in Petrella village," etc.

Liberatore, alias Combattello, of Popoli, twenty-two years old, testified: "That head which lies there was brought in yesterday into the hands of the Ensign Ottavio . . . and I know very well that it is the head of Olimpio Calvetti."

The declaration of Lopes is lacking among the documents preserved; but that he too was present and agreed with the other witnesses appears from a letter written by Muccino on May 25th to Captain De Sanctis, who was at Tagliacozzo: "I have informed Your Honour what I have done to lay hands on the bandits of Borghetto; . . . but since my arrival in those regions they have scattered into various places, owing to the spies they have in the Roman Campagna. Already on the morning of the 17th inst. the head of Olimpio Calvetti was presented to me by a certain Marco Tullio of the Roman Campagna. And I sent our soldier Donatello to receive it near Rieti, and I have had it identified in the abbey of San Quirico by Gio. Vincenzo Lopes di Borbona; and I purposed to send it to Chieti to the Signor Marchese [of Celenza], as I have done with the prisoners in these days past; but I am advised that he has removed to Naples. And as this head began to stink from the hot weather, I have had it hung on a tree in the valley of Colle, beside the public way."

For many days travellers, going tranquilly upon their business, were forced to witness this appalling spectacle!

Marco Tullio came to the Lake of Piediluco. He left the mare in a house, crossed the lake in a skiff, and arrived in the village when it was already dark. He soon found Pacifico and Cesare Bussone, and told them that he had delivered Olimpio's head to an official of the Marchese di Celenza, who had assured him "that the bounty would be paid him." He bade Pacifico remain in Onofrio's house, and said to Cesare that it was high time they were leaving. Again they crossed the dark lake in the skiff, heading toward the little light at the inlet. Thence they descended to Terni, where at last the two could rest, Marco Tullio especially, whose labours had indeed been excessive. Their hearts were light at the fine feat performed upon the friend with whom, only the day before, they had so gaily eaten in the Montani house, and with whom they had "disported themselves" through the streets of Piediluco.

The following morning Cesare took the road to Rome, still riding the white mare. Marco Tullio said: "He no longer wished to go to the Madonna of Loreto"; he obtained other "little Madonnas of tin, which Pacifico had brought back from that shrine." This was to prove, on his arrival in Rome, that he had in fact made a pilgrimage to the famous Sanctuary of the Marches.

Cesare returned to Rome by Rignano Flaminio, below Civita Castellana; he was in the city at noon on the 19th. He dismounted at the Cenci palace, where he temporarily stabled his unfortunate mare, which could now hardly stand for weariness. He told all whom he met that he had just returned from Loreto.

"Then later that evening, when it was dark, I brought her back to the Montalto stables and delivered her to a stableman of Monsignore Guerra, named Fioretta; . . . and I went upstairs to Monsignore Guerra's rooms and recounted to him the end which had befallen del Olimpio; . . . and Monsignore said to me that I should take good heed to speak of it to no man."

CHAPTER XXII

THE NET TIGHTENS

Although Monsignore Guerra had charged Cesare Bussone to speak to no one of Olimpio's death, it was important that the Cenci in the Castello prison should get the news without delay. Cesare therefore forthwith resumed his task of carrying them their meals in order to inform them of his memorable achievement.

Lucrezia relates: "Cesare, Giacomo's clerk, told me that Olimpio was dead, and that he himself had had him killed. It happened in the Castello; I was sitting at the barred window of the cell; and I took the opportunity to ask this Cesare where he had been, for the soldier Ascanio, who was my guard, had told me that Cesare no longer was coming to bring food, though the other servants of Signor Giacomo were bringing it, and they said that Cesare had gone away. When I saw Cesare I asked him where he had been and when he had returned; and he said to me: 'Yes, I have been away and I have had Olimpio killed.' And I answered him: 'Wretched man, why did you do this? You will go to prison!' And he answered: 'I did it as a service to my masters; I wish them to know my mettle, and I have no fear of going to prison. Monsignore Guerra is with me; I will do what he tells me.'

It was easy to have access to Lucrezia, who was always seated in the barred window near the chapel of the Castel Sant' Angelo. It was not so easy to penetrate to Giacomo. None the less, Cesare succeeded, on May 27th, in speaking to Giacomo as well, with the connivance of the soldiers, from whom the vice-castellan certainly did not demand too strict a surveillance of the Cenci. Giacomo says: "This Cesare used to bring us all our food to the Castello. It chanced that for many days he did not come

to bring us food, and I said to the soldier who guarded me, who was that Lodovico who brings me my own meals: 'Ask what news there is from the people at home who are looking after my case.' And Lodovico said to me: 'Cesare does not come here any longer; it is another man. I asked him about Cesare and he told me he had left Rome.' And a few days later Cesare came as he had been wont and told me that he had been out of Rome. He spoke to me from a little roof in the Castello which lies below the window of the room where I was; and he told me that he had been out of Rome. And he said to me further that he had got Olimpio killed, and that Olimpio was dead; and afterwards he said that he himself had killed him. And at that I laughed and said to him: 'Begone, you rogue, you are joking!' And he answered me: 'Nay, it is true, I killed him with my own hands.' Now this talk with Cesare took place two days after Your Honour allowed me to arrange my defence. . . . Further, about this business of the killing, I think that Cesare also told it to my womenfolk who were in the Castello, but the ladies and I did not believe it; we laughed at it and thought it a jest, for folk told me that Olimpio had gone far away; some said he was in Genoa, some, in Sicily; some said here, some there."

He continued: "In the matter of Olimpio this is what happened between Monsignore Guerra and myself: the cook [Giuseppe, cook to Amerigo Capponi] used to come with word from Monsignore that we should be of good heart, for Olimpio was in Genoa, and sometimes he would say in Sicily, and sometimes he said in Ferrara, and sometimes in Milan, and sometimes here and sometimes there; fifty times he sent word by that cook that we should feel no alarm about Olimpio, for he was far away." Thus Giacomo spoke about Monsignore Guerra, not without a somewhat acid suggestion. He added, however, that Guerra had finally informed him, still by way of the cook, "that Olimpio was dead beyond a shadow of doubt, and that we need not fear any longer that he would hurt our case!"

On May 22d Giacomo had been put to two other examinations[1] in the Castello; indecisive skirmishing ensued between Moscato, who wished him to confess that he had already been in prison on the charge of attempting to poison his father, and Giacomo, who would indeed confess that he had been imprisoned, but would not tell the subject of the accusation. "The misdeeds which my father alleged against me are in the trial records; . . . they examined me about a boy . . . who said things and then unsaid them and then said them again, and in short told a thousand lies. . . . I do not recall precisely what this boy said against me; . . . in short I must refer you to the trial record, for I do not remember what the fellow said." This singular dispute lasted a long time, and was ended by Moscato's reading of the original charge. The accused, however, then asserted that he had a full acquittal granted him by Rucellai, Governor of Rome, and that he would produce the document. On the 25th, still in the Castello, and Giunta being again present, Moscato, probably upon the plea of Cardinal Sangiorgio,[2] granted Giacomo the right to arrange for his own defence. He allowed only three days' time, stipulating that the defence should not prejudice any later trial, and that Giacomo should remain in close confinement. The same notice had been given the day before (May 24th) to Bernardo, after a long examination. Bernardo had stated: "I am content that Signor Farinaccio and Signor Orazio Cherubio be my advocates, and that others act for my brother and sister; and for attorney I appoint Signor Antonio Rubeus."

It is to this date that we must assign Beatrice's letter

[1] The first however comes to our hands incomplete, as its beginning is a part of the lacuna in the records, of which we have spoken.

[2] "Cardinal Sangiorgio, who is a friend of Signor Giacomo Cenci, had words about him with the Pope. Finally he sent for the Fiscale and asked him why the case was not hastened; and at the reply that this was not possible as the evidence was great and weighty, Sangiorgio answered that he wished the thing brought to an end, and if they were guilty that they be punished, and if not guilty they should be set free." Cod. Urb. lat. 1067, f. 362 r. & v.

to Tignosino in which she expresses pleasure that Prospero Farinaccio has agreed to defend the case.[1]

In Bernardo's interrogatory of May 24th, the questioning turned for the hundredth time on the fall from the balcony. In speaking of the disputes between father and sons, Bernardo exclaimed: "My father never made any complaint in any place against me; I was always a good son!" He knew well, he said, that his father had been in prison, and he knew the foul accusations against him. When his father had been released from prison, he had removed the witness and Paolo from home and had put them to school. He then said that he did not know of any complaints made against himself by Signor Francesco; nor did he know of Giacomo's imprisonment. Thereat the judge, sneering, informed him of the results of the trial. Said Bernardo: "Signore, I did not know that this Olimpio had killed my father. If I had known these things I myself would have killed Olimpio." But he had not known it. And for that reason had contributed his fifty scudi to the fund for Olimpio's pardon!

The interrogatory closed with another expression of scorn on the part of the judge.

When the news got abroad that "the Cenci had been permitted to make their defence," the tale was spread that they had confessed. Giovanni Mocenigo, Venetian ambassador, wrote from Rome on June 12th to his government: "Two brothers and a sister of the Cenci family . . . have been proved guilty of procuring the death of their father."

[1] The letter is published by Dalbono in his Storia di Beatrice Cenci, p. 135. He declares that he had obtained a copy of it without having seen the original; therefore he is not sure of its authenticity. The references to people and things contained in it are perfect, except that "Signorino" is to be corrected to "Tignosino." This is certainly an error of printing or transcription. The Lazzaro mentioned later in it is that Lazzaro of Joseph who entered the Cenci service early in 1599, as we are soon to learn. He remained secretly for some time in the palace after the arrest of the Cenci.

We must, however, consider false the other letter dated July 29, with the address to Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandino. This is also reproduced by Dalbono, pp. 433-435.

But on the same day an *avviso* to the Court of Urbino gave information that this news was false; it asserted that the Cenci had merely requested copies of the trial record so that their innocence might be "the more apparent." These statements were obviously inexact, but they revealed a certain contact with the truth; or rather, they were mutilations of the truth. Likewise the favours accorded by the vice-castellan, Amerigo Capponi, to the Cenci, and his open sympathy for Beatrice, were enough to give rise to the story transmitted on June 16th to the same Court, "that the young captive daughter of Signor Francesco Cenci is to become the wife of the sub-castellan, Capponi, with 30,000 scudi of dowry; and surely he would not find so good a match in Florence, although he is of no mean house. They at least do not appear to fear for the outcome of this trial, for all the contrary talk one hears about Rome."

The news of Olimpio's murder became known to all, gentle and simple, in the palace of Cardinal Montalto. Lodovica and the servants at the Monte de' Cenci, the prisoners and the soldiers knew of it; so likewise did very many other people throughout Rome. It was referred to and discussed in various places; Guerra and Cesare Bussone were widely accused of it. And finally the news reached the courts; they were half angry, half mortified. It was a serious affront to the Law, which lost in Olimpio one of the principal figures in the tragedy, whereas a little diligence might have unearthed him in the Papal State itself, at no great distance from Rome!

To arrest Monsignore Guerra, sheltered as he was beneath the ample wings of Cardinal Montalto, without due preparation and without knowing the attitude of the Pope, Cardinal Aldobrandino and Monsignore Taverna, would be a ticklish affair. Therefore Bussone alone was taken into custody. He was arrested by the *sbirri* in Pescheria, near the Portico d'Ottavia, on the morning of May 28th, and taken to Corte Savella. There he was put through a long preliminary examination.

He said that he had been a shoemaker before entering the Cenci's service; later he had served Signor Cristoforo, and after the latter's death, Giacomo and Bernardo. When his masters, and Lucrezia and Beatrice, had been imprisoned, he had brought food to those who were in the Castello, with the help of a certain Lazzaro of Assergi, "a little fellow, with fair skin and a beard just beginning."

At this point he began to flounder in a series of lies and confused statements. He had never been outside of Rome since Christmas; at Easter he had gone to the seven churches, and for that reason had taken the horse. He expanded his tale with infinite details to give his falsehoods a colour of truth.

"To what churches did you go?"

His answer was slow in coming. Finally he could remember only six. He was unable to describe three of these: San Sebastiano, Santa Croce di Gerusalemme, and San Lorenzo.

"Is the Church of San Sebastiano large or small?"

"I did not measure it, my lord."

"Has it a courtyard?"

"I know not for certain if it have or no. . . . I look at the Saints, and I tell my beads."

He knew just as little of the two others; yet he showed no alarm. He insisted that every one in the Cenci establishment knew that he went to the seven churches, for he had immediately said so to the people who had asked him where he had been! "These people were the wet-nurses who are in the house; there are four or five of them, who give suck, so they say." The number of wet-nurses for one infant (Cristoforo, born July 2d, 1598) seemed excessive to the Court; Bussone therefore qualified his statement: "Now they no longer all give suck, or only two; they are enough." He had, besides this, told several "house-servants" where he had been. Bussone appears to have thought that Moscato should be satisfied by the mere fact that he had told the same lie to many others before telling it to the judge!

He floundered on, making a thousand bungling answers to the questions: Whose horse was it? When had he removed it from the stable and when had he returned it? How did it happen that no one perceived him in the act? Why had he made no request for permission from Signora Lodovica?

Witness then told of his journey to the Sanctuary of Loreto on a white horse given him by Monsignore Guerra "at the foot of the stairway at Tor de' Conti." Later he admitted that he had received the horse in the courtyard of the Montalto palace. After getting the horse, he continued, he had led it to a court in the Palazzo Cenci. Then he corrected himself: "It is a sort of room, but it is none the less a court." This time also he had left without saying a word to any one, but on his return he had told every one where he had been.

Being asked to describe his journey, he came off very well as far as Terni; further on, as was only natural, he became confused and embarrassed, never having even seen the road. He sought to help himself out with descriptions he had heard. Passing Spoleto and Foligno, "I went on a space to lodge for the night, but I know not where I lodged." He knew vaguely that near Loreto lay Recanati, "according to what has been told me"; then he concluded: "I can tell no more."

He stated that before setting out on his return journey he had bought some rosaries and little figures of the Madonna of Loreto. He had given them, when in Rome, to a boy named Lorenzo, "son of a certain Cesare and a lady called Paoletta; they make rosary tassels." As the reader knows, Cesare Bussone had obtained the objects mentioned from his brother, Pacifico, who had actually gone to Loreto.

He had indeed paused at Terni, both going and returning, but only to rest himself and his horse and to visit his sister and her husband. He was always alone on his journeys. However, he had spoken, both going and returning, to some one near Borghetto: "a vermicelli-maker with whom I trade when I buy supplies here in Rome. His

shop is among the pork-butcher shops of Pescaria, to the right-hand side; there he has a vermicelli shop. He is a man of middle age; I met him below Borghetto, I could not say exactly where. He was coming on foot toward Rome, and he asked me where I was going. I answered that I was on my way to my own village, and nothing more; each of us continued his journey."

He mentioned the money Giacomo Cenci had given him, as if it were part of his regular wages. He spoke of the clothing he had bought. This testimony is of some interest: "I have a cloak of Spanish cloth which I bought before Signor Cristoforo died, from a servant of his for nine scudi; I keep it in Signor Giacomo's house, in the servants' hall. I do not know that servant's name . . . he was a Fleming; and now I know not where he is, nor where he has gone, for I have not seen him since. If he was not a regular servant of Signor Cristoforo, he would serve him occasionally as groom. He was an apprentice with Maestro Tiberio the bootmaker below Santiquattro;[1] and this cloak was black in colour. I did not go to the government office to register buying the cloak from this servant; when I bought it, it was in the presence of Ottavio [Pali], Signor Cristoforo's servant, who was present at his death. I know not where he may be now. The cloak was worth twenty scudi, by what I was told, and I would not sell it now for less than thirty." According to the proclamations, Bussone should have declared this purchase and paid the tax; but he made the excuse: "I did not know of the proclamations." He spoke finally of certain rings, and again dwelt on the money he possessed.

When this first examination was ended, he was confined in a cell, his companion being a man with the itch. Two days later, on being again brought before Moscato and Giunta, he protested: "My lords, please see that no further wrong be done me. I wish to beseech your lordships in regard to the wrong which is now being done me there in the prison; I wish to have a proper cellmate; I know what has been done me there."

[1] Alluding to the palace of the titular cardinal of the Santiquattro.

"What do you mean?"

"My lord, I mean that Your Lordship examined me and then thrust me in prison because I went to the Madonna of Loreto and the seven churches, and I mean also that Your Lordship should change my cell."

"Explain yourself more clearly."

"I mean to state that Your Lordship should change my cell . . . because Giovanni Battista alias Bitta, who is with me in the cell, is covered with itch and sores. Otherwise his company is good."

"Why do you wish to have your cell changed?"

"My Lord, I have told you; for the itch that my cellmate has. I have not got the itch. . . . I do not know what it is!"

The judge changed the subject. "Do you know any of the guards at Corte Savella?"

"Yes, I have known Barnabeo ever since Signor Cristoforo sent me to those prisons to visit his servant, Giovan Battista."

Finally, as if to awaken in him the painful suspicion that the Law knew much more about his affairs than it was showing just now, Moscato asked him if he had known Calvetti.

"Yes, in the house of the Cenci before Paolo's death; that was before Christmas." [1]

Nothing can be more singular than the lack of co-operative action among all those charged with administering justice for Olimpio's murder. The Pontifical Tribunal, which would gladly have had the live Olimpio in its hands, was trying Cesare Bussone on the charge of having murdered him. The Royal Courts, on the other hand, were delighted to have got rid of Olimpio, the outlaw and murderer. They congratulated Marco Tullio,

[1] Cesare Bussone is mistaken or lies when he says that he had known Olimpio in Rome, "since both of us had served Giacomo Cenci and Don Cristoforo Cenci, etc., five or six months before we did the killing." Olimpio was never in the service of any of the Cenci; and Cristoforo was killed eleven months before Olimpio.

and promised him and his companions the payment of the rewards due. Nor was this all. The ensign Ottavio Muccino, unwilling that his own very tiny portion of merit be taken from him, made no report either of the bounty or of Olimpio's head to the Lieutenant, or Governor, of Rieti. That unfortunate official bestirred himself for a fortnight more in collecting various rumours current through the city and in questioning Marco Tullio's relatives. One of them he even gaoled. He succeeded in establishing the fact that Marco Tullio had carried Olimpio's head to Rieti, had left it there and hurried to Cittaducale, whence he had returned with "a young man riding a horse," and had delivered the burden to him. But at this point the Governor lost track of everything, despite the fact that he should have been enlightened by official communications. But he was left in such ignorance that when the Podestà of Piediluco inquired about Olimpio's head, he did not hide his surmise that it had been taken to Rome.

The first witness summoned at Rieti was Giuseppe Bernabei, on June 1st. He told how Marco Tullio had descended upon Domenico Ranzetta's house, and how he had departed again forthwith for Cittaducale, leaving a severed head which witness had seen in his kinsman's storeroom.

Isabetta related her uncle's arrival at Rieti, which we now know so well; she told of his rapid journey to Cittaducale, of the meal in her house, and of Marco Tullio's hasty return to Terni.

As for Ranzetta, the Lieutenant was at first inclined to clap him in prison. But in his examination (June 2d) he repeated approximately what his wife and kinsman had already deposed. He persisted that Marco Tullio had revealed nothing to him, "and if he had told me it I would have chased him away, and would not have received him into my house; and as for the head I do not know that it was ever in my house." He denied that his kinsman could have seen it. But since he confessed that he suspected his uncle of committing the crime at Cantalice, the

Lieutenant asked him why he had not promptly made the proper denunciation.

"I did not denounce him . . . because I thought but little of it. I did not think of denouncing him to the Court because I did not think I had done any evil in receiving Marco Tullio, for I did not know that he had cut off that head."

He was admonished to make preparations for his own defence. On June 17th Narcisco d'Arrone furnished some information concerning Olimpio which is not new to us.

However, the case was dropped. Information that the assassins of Olimpio Calvetti were law-abiding people, deserving well of Justice, had finally reached the lieutenant.

On June 1st the Podestà of Piediluco also opened the "judicial inquisition" against Giovan Battista and Alessandro Montani and against their uncle, Giovanni Onofrio Matteuccio, for sheltering "the man described," accused and sought for by the Courts of Rome, in order to assassinate him later. On June 2d the Podestà sent Giovan Paolo Bonifacio, public messenger, to their house with a summons to them to present themselves. He did not find them, for they had taken flight. Just as the Podestà of Terni had let Olimpio escape, so did the Podestà of Piediluco let the Bussone, the Montani and Matteuccio slip through his fingers. The Court of Rome had reason to be proud of its officials!

On June 3d the summons was repeated, naturally in vain. On the 5th Antonio Anselmo, a relative of the Montani, presented himself to the Podestà to inform him that the Montani were absent from the village and from the territory. He asked a fortnight to seek them out and warn them; but the Podestà granted him only five days.

On the 9th the Podestà opened his inquiry, examining fishermen, boatmen, shopkeepers, and innkeepers. Here it is to be noted that several fell into the error of indicating May 18th and sometimes the 16th, as the day when Olimpio passed through Piediluco; therefore the 19th, or the

17th, was stated to be the day of his death. To be sure the witnesses expressed some doubt as to the exactness of their reckoning. The error arose certainly from one of these two causes: either a false calculation prevailed in the village discussions as to the day when Olimpio had passed through; or, as we think more likely, the Podestà himself communicated to the others an error of his own, by questioning them, for example, in this manner: "Did you see in Piediluco on May 18th a stranger of such a description?" or: "Were you in Piediluco on Tuesday, May 18th, before Ascension Eve?"

Naturally some witnesses tacitly accepted the date given by authority, and continued with their depositions. That the demands were couched in this form is proved to us also by certain answers such as this: "Signor Podestà, on that day Your Honor mentions, before Ascension Eve, I went to Castel di Lago," or: "It is true that two days before Ascension, I saw, etc."

That Olimpio was killed at dawn of May 17th appears from the declaration of one of the participants in the crime, not from the official records of the examination of the body and the identification of the head. Pacifico Bussone says: "We killed him on the 17th of May." And the Ensign Muccino: "On the morning of the 17th Olimpio's head was presented to me." Likewise, the documents concerning the examination of the body carried out on the day after the crime all bear the date of the 18th.[1]

On June 9th the Podestà of Piediluco opened his interrogatories, beginning with Filesio d'Ippolito Onorati, fisherman. He confined himself to saying that he had learned that the murdered man of Cantalice, who "had a

1 Finuccio, host of Santa Susanna inn, also led into error, set Olimpio's death on the 19th, although he says: "if I remember well." Then he demonstrates his confusion by adding that he ceded and yielded up his inn on the evening of the 18th. In that case how could he have said that he did not go to see the corpse "because he had no one to leave in the inn," if the crime was performed the day after his departure from the inn? Further, we read in the *inquisitio* of the trial concerning the hospitality accorded to Olimpio by the Montani: "*die vero decimo octavo dicti maii, seu alio veriori tempore.*

very fine mare," was certainly the man who was sheltered the previous day by the Montani together with some men of Terni who were returning from Loreto.

The deposition of Drusilla, sister of Giovan Battista and of Alessandro Montani, was not likely to be more interesting. Although she could have told a great deal the woman was extremely cautious: "So many strangers are coming all the time that I do not stop to heed who they may be; I have something besides that to do in the house." The Podestà sought to extract from her where her brothers and her uncle, Onofrio Matteuccio, had hidden when summoned to appear. But she did not know where they were. She had indeed seen, in her house, at about Ascension tide, her cousins from Terni with a stranger. But all had been unarmed; they had arrived in the morning and departed again in the evening. She had observed nothing else, and would add no more. The insistency of the Podestà, even his threats, could not budge her an inch.

The last examination on the 9th was that of Tarquinio, fisherman, son of Domenico, deceased. He said that while he was preparing his nets with another fisherman he had seen Pacifico passing through Carpine. There also he had heard the tale of the headless man found at Cantalice inn, from a family coming from Rieti.[1]

Naturally the Podestà questioned no one on the 10th of June. Not only was it Sunday; it was the day of Corpus Domini. To make up for the delay he lost no time on Monday, when fully nine examinations were made. Three of them, those of Properzio di Nicola, Francesco Mori and Michele di Luca, were made at the domicile, in their *camera cubicularia*, for all three were ill in bed.

[1] The informant of the Court of Urbino made a strange confusion (on June 9th) between Olimpio Calvetti and Paolo Bruno Corso: "I have heard that the Paolo Corso who killed Signor Cristoforo Cenci some time ago has been himself killed. . . . He had betaken himself to Terni to the house of a friend, who led him for a jaunt to Piediluco on Velino lake. And when he lay down to rest or sleep in a little wood his good friend cut off his head and brought it to Rome."

Francesco Antonio di Giovan Francesco knew but little. He merely reported that he had met the four on the road near Santa Lucia. They were journeying toward Santa Susanna. One was on horseback; he wore in his hat little images of the Madonna of Loreto. For that reason the witness believed that the group was returning from the shrine.

Michele, nicknamed "the Spaniard," son of Giovan Francesco, deceased, inn-keeper in Piediluco, near the Montani house, had repeatedly seen the stranger (Olimpio) on the day he was in the village. He had observed him attentively. A handsome man and well turned out, he twice remarked. He was able to give the Podestà a complete description, even to the dead man's dress. His close observation had enabled him to realise immediately on hearing the description of the victim of Cantalice, that it was the same man who had stopped at the Montani house, and had there eaten and drunk. Fine hospitality that of Quirino's sons, which took customers from an honest inn-keeper! "So many people arrive there that the house seems an inn," he said with a touch of irritation; but immediately realised his indiscretion and pursued: "They are young men so kindly disposed toward all that they set no price on their giving of food and drink."

The stranger had left in the evening, riding his "fine mare." The witness had later heard that he was an "outlaw of great importance." He gave the names of those who had led the stranger into an ambush and killed him.

Properzio di Nicola of Piediluco was the man who "rented the privilege of the lake-ferry, paying sixteen scudi yearly." He recalled the occasion when he had ferried over the "stranger" for the first time, together with Onofrio Matteuccio and "another beardless youth" [Pacifico]. He had encountered the stranger a second time in the streets of Piediluco. Francesco and Mori and others had seen him by day. Witness then added this impressive detail: "Late that evening . . . I was under the bridge of Battaglioni (some call it Battaglino), and I saw that same

man pass by, alone and riding a white mare, and unarmed."

Since Olimpio was alone only for that part of his journey that lay between the Montani house and the Porta di Porto Piano, we must infer that the bridge of Battaglioni or Battaglino was within the village. Probably it was merely an arch on the central street, spanning a low cross-alley or even a large ditch.

The testimony of the inn-keeper, Giovanni Simone Orsini, indicates rather muddled wits than any desire to deceive the Podestà. The "stranger" had passed by with two others; he had asked for the stockings forgotten on March 20th. This much of the testimony was true. But then the host confused him with some other travellers, and said that the stranger "was going to the Madonna of Loreto, unarmed and on foot, in the manner of pilgrims; and he was bearing the pilgrim's staff!"

The fishmonger, Ottavio di Pietro Petti, on the other hand, had kept his eyes more wide open. He was well able to describe "the unknown man" and to specify his companions at Piediluco. He was also certain that it was Alessandro who had taken the mare from the stable in the evening and had brought it to the door of the Montani house.

Michele di Luca d'Antonio gave approximately the same information. He had seen the mysterious stranger "disporting about the village all day" with his friends. Also, he had been with Francesco Mori under the Battaglino bridge, when, in the evening, "that man of truly fine aspect" had passed there, "on horseback, and he seemed in sooth a painting, so fine did he look there." They had observed to each other that he was leaving too late to go to Santa Susanna, and too early if he meant to spend the night at Piediluco inn. They then suspected that he was an outlaw. Naturally when the news arrived of the murdered man, they realised that it was he. The same conviction came to Marco d'Annibale Pasquali, another fisherman of the town. He had seen the "strangers, who had every appearance of being decent folk, with some

images of the Madonna of Loreto in their hats; and all of them were unarmed."

The interrogatories were suspended by the Podestà of Piediluco for four days, and resumed on June 15th. Stefano Constatello, another fisherman, and Ettore Fasiolo, dealer in fishermen's supplies, were questioned about some talk of Onofrio Matteuccio's, uttered in Ettore's shop. They reported that Matteuccio had lamented because he was called an accomplice in the murder. He had said: "I know nothing of it; . . . if my nephews bring a friend to my house, would you not have me treat him kindly? How do I know who he may be? I have to show my love toward them." He grieved at the death of "that fine and courtly man."

Flaminio di Giovan Ercole, of Piediluco, deposed that when he asked who the stranger was, he had merely obtained the answer "that he said he was a Roman." Pier Simone di Giovanni Girolamo, or Janni Blasi, recounted that when the stranger had asked him where fish might be bought, he had said that on that day he would only find them listening to Saint Anthony! The last testimony taken was that of Giovanni Paoli di Bonifacio, public porter, of Piediluco. He too had been present when the question about the fish had been asked and when Alessandro had brought the mare to the stranger, who had then "started off toward the Porta di Porto Piano, on the Rieti road," while his companions "turned back and up through a lane and went out over the hillside."

Four of the witnesses interrogated by the Podestà of Piediluco were later summoned, about the middle of July, brought to Rome, and there again examined by the same Gaspare Giuzza[1] who had directed the capture of Catalano. These men were Properzio di Nicola; Michele di Giovan Francesco, called the Spaniard, inn-keeper; Ottavio Petti; and Giovan Paolo di Bonifacio. They added

[1] On July 3d 8 scudi were delivered to Giuzza, substitute for Mariotto, "for travelling expenses for 10 days that he may go and get witnesses." *Libro della Depositeria Generale di Papa Clemente VIII*, 1599, f. 84 v.

nothing to the matter already set down except perhaps a few topographical details. These had not been necessary for the Podestà of Piediluco, who was on the spot, but were useful to the Roman judge, who did not know the region. For example, Properzio said, in his examination of July 16th: "Your Honour must know that now one can come to Piediluco without crossing the lake; for there are bridges at the Marmora, and one can come there by land on the lakeside."

Meanwhile requests were sent from the Court of Rome to the Podestà of Piediluco for more enlightenment in regard to the exact spot where Olimpio had been killed and buried. The Podestà therefore sent a certain Prospero di Quinzio as a guide to Messer Biagio Cappello, Substitute in the Roman Court, who had arrived on this mission. Capello later obtained the declaration which follows, in the inn of Francesco Carpani, Milanese, near the Piazza of Rieta: "When we arrived at the inn of Cantalice, or rather, beyond that inn, we found a heap of stones with a wooden cross thereon; and this heap stands to the right side of the road." Here was buried the man "found without a head." Various people affirmed this fact to him; in especial two men "who were working near the inn." On July 20 Cappello, in the Palace of the Episcopal Court of Rieti, took the declaration of a *sbirro*, Giovan Battista di Pietro, of Piediripa, in the diocese of Fermo, near the Chienti River, and below Pausula. He had made the journey with Cappello and Prospero di Quinzio. He confirmed everything: "When His Honour heard this, he had two men of Cantalice called who were at work grinding sainfoin near that place . . . and they answered him that a man had been buried there who had been found murdered and headless, and that they who had killed him were three." One of the workmen had seen the dead man and described his dress.

The last man whom Capello examined was Pietro Paolo Finuccio, formerly host at Santa Susanna. He had been arrested in his village, Rivodutri, and brought to Rieti. On the 21st he was subjected to an examination in the

Governor's Palace. He repeated his story of the "four men" who had come by night, with their white mare, to his inn, and had departed again by night, before the dawn. He told how they had slept in the stable, how they had taken their leave, and described the appearance of the stranger. He said that he had realised from the description of the dress of the murdered man that it was "that big man of fine aspect" whom he had lodged.

Let us now return to other events and other characters.

On June 7th, Monday, at Anticoli Campagna, the Governor's sheriff arrested Plautilla, her nephew, Papirio and the latter's parents, Messer Giovan Francesco Alessandri and Antonia, Olimpio's sister. These individuals were then taken to Rome by the Court of Frosinone. What was perhaps a sorrowful presentiment had led Plautilla to make a trip on the previous day to a Madonna on the Torre Caietani road in whom she placed great faith.

On their arrival in Rome they were interned in the Corte Savella. There Alessandri underwent a first examination on the 13th before Molella. He understood that his arrest was "on account of his kinsman, Olimpio Calvetti," who was held to be one of those responsible for the murder of Francesco Cenci. He spoke of the coming to Anticoli of Plautilla, of Fra' Pietro, and of Olimpio. He asserted that before May 13th Plautilla had lived in the house of Michele Borghese and his wife Settimia, who, as we know, was Olimpio's sister. The witness said that he had been ill in bed when Olimpio came to Anticoli, and that Olimpio had lodged with the Borghese. Olimpio had confessed nothing to him at any time; on the contrary he had said "that he had heard the noise when Signor Francesco had his fall, he meant the screaming." Olimpio had added also that he had "been sick in some prison, but he did not say . . . either where or how." [1] Witness spoke of the Calvetti family and of his own. His wife, Antonia, also was a sister of Olimpio.

[1] The allusion is to the attempted poisoning of Olimpio at Novellara.

Then came the turn of the unhappy Plautilla. After saying that she had been arrested in the Alessandri house, the wretched woman continued: "It has been told me that my husband is dead; the Anticoli muleteers who came to Rome for the salt and other things told it to other folk first, and then they told it to me, that it was being said here in Rome that Olimpio was dead. And I learned it a month and a half ago [Is it possible they may have told her he was dead before the actual fact?], therefore I dyed this gown which I now wear a black colour which first was red [it was the gown given her by Lucrezia], and I put this black taffeta on my head because I had no black stuffs for that purpose."

She described her flight and that of Olimpio from La Petrella; she told how he had brought her to Rome and abandoned her in the house of Cinzia and Giustino, the laundryman, "without bread or wine or money," in all the horror of the flood.

Why did she say that Olimpio "remained only one night" at Anticoli "and came there alone"? The judge put this query to her, and she replied: "I do not remember anything except when I saw him suddenly standing there before me . . . and I did not want to see him nor speak to him." Her protracted misery seems actually to have robbed the poor woman of her memory. She also maintained that on that single night of his stay he slept with her in the Alessandri house. She told falsehoods aimlessly: "He was riding on a chestnut mare which he had bought at Cícoli before we left La Petrella, nay it was while Signor Francesco Cenci was still alive." Now we know that this mare had been lost by Pacifico Bussone on his return from Florence. Olimpio, she said, had left before day, alone; "but never since have I had letters from any person, nor have I had further news of his whereabouts, except, as I have said, when it was told me that he was dead!"

On the morning of the 14th Messer Giovanni Francesco Alessandri was re-examined. He insisted that he had never heard of Olimpio's death. His words thus contra-

dict those of Plautilla. He denied even that she could have learned the fact. "If she had learned it, I too would have learned it; for I would have seen her put on widow's weeds, and dye her clothes as women do when their husbands die; but on the Sunday past, a week ago yesterday, she went out, for there is a Madonna between Anticoli and La Torre, which is devoutly worshipped; and she went there in company with many other women of Anticoli, wearing a bright dress, which she would not have worn had she been a widow."

The judge called his attention to the fact that Plautilla had in fact dyed the dress she was wearing black; the witness immediately tried to rob the fact of any significance by saying that she had dyed it some time before, or shortly after Olimpio's departure from Anticoli. "As for the black veil which she was wearing on her head, she had worn it customarily and regularly, and not for any widowhood." And since Plautilla had also said that she had slept with Olimpio in the Alessandri house, while the other affirmed that he had slept in the Borghese house, Moscato set the two on the stand and let them argue the matter between them for a time.

Then Plautilla was subjected to a longer and more painful interrogatory. She spoke of her marriage to Olimpio and of their life in Petrella castle, so tranquil until Francesco Cenci arrived with his wife and daughter. She mentioned Cenci's journeys, the change of quarters in the castle, Olimpio's expulsion from the fortress, and the visits she and her husband had made subsequently to certain rooms to get various objects that had been left there. She described the imprisonment of the Cenci women after Signor Francesco's second trip to La Petrella. "Signor Francesco departed twice, if I remember aright, from that castle and went to Rome. The first time he left the ladies free, so that they could go through all the castle; the second time he shut them in, and had little vents made above the windows and had the windows sealed so that they could not lean out, and he had the entrance door of the rooms shut fast, and therein

he had a wicket made in the door whereby Santi put in their food." She then told how once when Santi opened the door to bring in wood, the two ladies, at an end of patience, "sprang out and said, 'Now do you remain therein!'" After this the old custodian had abated their imprisonment, "letting them go free and locking them in only at night."

But there is no need to repeat what we already know. Plautilla did not hide the fact that although Olimpio had slept with her on the night before the crime, he had not been with her on the two preceding nights; on those two days he had not even eaten with her. She reported the conversations she had had with her husband later, and her expedition to the castle vineyard to try to see if Olimpio were anywhere in the fortress. She told how her husband had perceived her, and had hastened home and beaten her; how the two had risen before light on the day of Cenci's death. She described the screams that had been heard, her own ascent to the castle, Lucrezia's fainting fit; she told how she and Olimpio had taken up their quarters with the ladies.

Plautilla's interrogatory, following that of Alessandri, could not be completed during the morning; it was therefore continued through the afternoon. Special emphasis was then laid on the great intimacy between all its inmates that went on in the castle after Cenci's death. She and her sister, Artemisia, had even gone so far as to sleep in the same room with the gentlewomen! She said that the conjugal bed, where Cenci slept with his wife, "was very low, and all the folk said, murmuring among themselves, that a mattress must have been removed from it, for it was not possible that Signor Francesco should sleep so meanly."

We know that at that time Olimpio had become the general factotum of the ladies. But Plautilla said: "Giorgio did the ladies' business . . . and my husband had not much concern therewith." However the ladies had been very kind toward her; Beatrice gave her "a gown of white

serge and certain stuffs for garments"; Lucrezia gave her a red dress to be cut down for Vittoria, and other "stuffs, dishes, and kitchen oddments," and a heap of mattress wool. When the Cenci women had gone to Rome, she had taken two mattresses from the castle, "that they might not come into the hands of the Court and of the *sbirri* sent by Biagio Querco . . . and because Olimpio was not there." She went on to the tale of the various removals of the mattresses and the wool, which we have recorded. But here again she let slip the words that in the wool "there were clots of dried blood." Yet she hastened to add that "there was no great quantity of these!"

She then related how the first rumours of a crime reached her on the evening of the day it had been committed. She told of her suspicions concerning her husband's actions on the preceding day, of her terrors, of her dialogues with Beatrice and with Lucrezia (from whom had escaped the sentence: "Have no fear that Olimpio is entangled in this; it was Marzio"), and with her husband, who said to her: "Be quiet . . . for I am not concerned in it; it is quite true that it was Marzio." She told of the first references to the manner of the killing; but she could not conceal that her doubts and despair had continued, despite all attempts to assure her that Olimpio had not been concerned, but that at the time of Signor Francesco's death he had been "at some spring above a garden." Her misery was increased by the assertions she heard on all sides that Olimpio was one of the perpetrators of the crime.

She told of the black days that followed; of the coming to La Petrella of Querco and later of Tirone; of the wanderings of Olimpio and herself. Then her thoughts shifted backward; she shuddered as she told how the arch-priest had come to get the cloths due to the Company of the Sacrament, and how, when Lucrezia was giving them to him, she had perceived the sheet, stiff with blood, stuffed in between two chests, how she had drawn it forth and

shown it with horror to Lucrezia, and how Lucrezia had trembled.[1] What a night had followed!

Next to Marzio Catalano's confession, this examination of Plautilla was the weightiest evidence against the Cenci. To be sure, the Court, saving some details, was well aware of the various stages of the crime; it could point with assurance to those who had planned it and carried it out. But according to legal procedure, the judge was obliged to obtain direct and precise confessions from the accused. Condemnations resting on mere circumstantial evidence and testimonies were not permissible except when the Court (one hesitates to employ the word Justice), not succeeding in obtaining confessions spontaneously, as in the case of Plautilla, was put to the harsh necessity of obtaining them at all costs, in other words of racking and torturing the accused until they would say whatever was required of them. It was merely good fortune if, as in the present case, the actual facts corresponded to what the tribunal demanded, and if blind superstition and mob-madness did not mingle with them, as in the trial of the Anointers.[2] From this custom—rather than law—of basing the sentence on the confession, arose the necessity laid upon the judges of extorting one. Nor was this all; another strange procedure took its rise from this situation. To obtain revelations at any cost, that is, by the application of torture, the Court converted many into "accused" who were in substance only witnesses. It would arrest them and consider them temporarily as malefactors, caring little if, after extorting true or false evidence, often by savage means, it set them free with dislocated and aching limbs. This has already occurred in our tale in the case of Lelio Antonelli.

The Cenci were promptly informed of the grave nature of Plautilla's deposition; their uncle Cesare and others outside of the Castello were likewise told of it. An

[1] Vialardo wrote to the Grand Duke (July 3, 1599): "The woman who washed the bloody shirt, sheets, and mattresses, has confessed."

[2] Men accused of spreading the plague in Milan, in the 16th century, by an infectious ointment. See Manzoni: I Promessi Sposi; Cesare Cantù: Commento storico ai Promessi Sposi (Milan), 1874.

avviso of June 19th brought word to the Court of Urbino: "The Cenci case begins to look black, two prisoners having lately been taken as accomplices in the crime, wherefore they have been confined in cells." That the prisoners were two in number was inexact; that they could be called accomplices in the crime—except conceivably in the case of Plautilla—was false; but it was true that new arrests had been made and grave evidence taken. The most evident proof that the situation of the accused was growing worse was the hasty journey made by Cesare Cenci, as soon as word of the new development was brought him, to the Convent of La Minerva. Fra' Pietro tells us that Cesare appeared there on Sunday, June 20th, "in a large room near the sacristy, which we call the Chapter Room. And he said to me: 'Do you know, Fra' Pietro, that your kinswoman, Plautilla, has done us a bad turn. She has confessed everything. But all this amounts to nothing; it is upon you that everything rests.' And he said to me: 'You will be taken; heed well that you confess nothing.' I said to him: 'Fear not, I shall say nothing.' And at this the Vicar General passed and said to me: 'Go and get the brothers into the choir, it is late.' So I straightway left Signor Cesare, saying no other word to him; and it was about two hours after this that I was arrested."

He stated again: "My arrest took place in this wise: in the morning [June 20th] at about the fifteenth hour [11 A. M.] I was sent for by the Father Superior of La Minerva. I went to the rooms of the Most Reverend Father, and there he spoke to me and said that a Minister of the Pope had been there and told him that I was wanted as a prisoner, by order of His Holiness, and he asked me if I had fallen into any guilt and if I knew aught of my brother, Olimpio. I answered him that I knew naught of it, and that I was conscious of no guilt, whereat the Most Reverend Father replied to me: 'You give me great consolation, my son.' And at this the Father Prior of this Convent of La Minerva arrived, and with him another father named Fra' Domenico Rossi of

Bologna; and the Father Superior said to them: 'Fathers, I consign to you this man as prisoner.' And he consigned me to these Fathers, and the Prior and his companion shut me as prisoner in our own prisons, and thence later I was conducted in a carriage to these cells of Tordinona at the second hour. And I was taken alone, and alone was I brought there."

His cell was searched; a few letters were found there and confiscated. One addressed to him, was from Fra' Tommaso, a Penitentiary. The other Fra' Pietro had written to his kinsman, but had not sent.

On that same day (June 20th) Antonia Calvetti, wife of Messer Giovan Francesco Alessandri, was examined for the first time. Also, her son Papirio took the stand for the second time.

Antonia's examination was of little importance. She spoke of the journey to Anticoli of her brothers, Fra' Pietro and Olimpio. The friar had told her that Olimpio and Plautilla were "wanderers and undone" on account of Cenci's death. Plautilla herself had made a like statement, but after her husband had again departed. The tale of the deed and of the imprisonment of the gentlewomen was being repeated everywhere; "I heard every one speak of it—down to the cats."

Papirio was first interrogated on June 18th. He told how he had been returning toward Anticoli from Marino, whither his sick father had sent him. He had met on the way his uncles, Fra' Pietro, Michele Borghese, and Agostino, the muleteer. They were coming from the opposite direction. They had persuaded the youth to retrace his steps and go to Rome, which he had never seen. Arriving by night, Agostino had gone to his own house and had taken Michele with him. But on account of the lateness of the hour, Fra' Pietro had not cared to disturb the convent; he had sought out his friend Diomede, Cardinal Borghese's carver. Papirio had accompanied him, and had dined and slept with the pair. Then, in the morning, the friar had brought his nephew to La Minerva; there

he was introduced into the cell in which Olimpio lay hidden.

Papirio's second examination was held on the 20th, again in the Corte Savella. It lasted some time, and was certainly interrupted by a recess for some hours—precisely those hours round noonday during which Fra' Pietro was taken prisoner and brought to Tordinona.

The most interesting part of the examination of Papirio on the 20th, in two sessions, was that relative to Olimpio's hiding-place in La Minerva, to the visits he received, and to the statements he had made: for example, his tale of Camillo Rosati's "treachery" at Novellara. The youth described at length Olimpio's departure from Rome with himself and with Michele Borghese, and their arrival at Anticoli.

As we have recorded, Plautilla had insisted that when Olimpio came to Anticoli, he had remained one night and had slept with her in the Alessandri house. But the boy stated with much ingenuousness: "We arrived at the first hour of night, and dismounted at my house and ate there . . . Olimpio first having visited my father in bed as was proper. But Michele did not come to my house, nor to eat with us, but went to his own house to say that he had come home. And after we had dined, Olimpio took leave of us and of my father, and went to sleep in Michele's house with his wife, Plautilla, who was staying there, and he stayed there three or four nights, and never came forth by day or night until that last evening when he came to my house to bid farewell to my father at near half an hour after the first hour of night. And while he was in Michele's house I would bring him food and drink, and once also I remained to eat with them. And then Olimpio departed from Anticoli, and I went in his company at about dawn, as far as the Castle gate; and he did not tell me where he wished to go, but I saw that he turned toward Subiaco; and when he bade me farewell he commended his wife to me, telling me that I should do her all kindness."

Papirio also said that Plautilla had confessed to him

that she had quitted La Petrella "because they fastened the guilt on her husband Olimpio of having had a hand in the death of a Cenci gentleman."

Papirio's testimony perhaps is the most honest we possess; that is, it corresponds most closely to the natural development of the facts and to the results of other examinations.

A third examination of Giovan Francesco Alessandri was made on the 22d. He admitted that he had written to Fra' Pietro "either one or two letters under the eyes of Plautilla," expressing her desire "to learn some news of the Cenci matters and of their imprisonment . . . and if he had any news of Olimpio, he should deliver it to her. . . . Plautilla was forever importuning me. . . . I never had any answer to those letters; I wrote them after Easter; and I wrote also to ask if the Cenci case was soon to be brought to an end. . . . I wrote to him also that Plautilla had taken shelter in my house."

So ended the examinations of the Alessandri.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FRIAR ON THE RACK

We come now to the examinations of Fra' Pietro Calvetti. One of the most singular figures of this record is this Dominican friar, "lay brother" of La Minerva, who "made his profession with only the minor orders," and who served as sacristan; illiterate, forever oscillating between intrigue and bigotry; whose falsehoods resisted torture, and yielded to a mere formula; who visited the sick with relics and sheltered his brother, a murderer, in his cell; who had masses said for the Cenci and abetted their intrigues; who prostrated himself in prayer in the church, and carried messages into the prison. He was one of those striking contradictions which have perhaps always existed on earth, but which flourished most rankly in days when moral limits were ill defined and when religion often degenerated either into exaltation or into a superstition which counted on wiping out the most atrocious deeds and crimes by acts quite external, believing that God was to be placated by offerings, as human justice was so often bribed to silence by gold.

On the 21st of June, in the Corte Savella, the friar was brought before Moscato, Molella, and the notary, Mazziotto, who recorded the questions and answers.

Fra' Pietro gave a brief account of Olimpio's life: "As a boy he entered the tailor's trade; later he went to the war of the naval armada of Pius V, then he went to the Portuguese war, and later he was with Signor Prospero and Signor Marzio Colonna. . . . In recent years he was at La Petrella and he had charge of certain affairs of Signor Marzio's . . . and he was castellan."

Witness had seen his brother's wife and children in Rome; in particular he had often visited Vittoria, at Plau-

tilla's behest, after carnival-time. The girl had been with Signora Lodovica Cenci. He had gone there almost always with Fra' Desiderio of Vicenza; once also he had been accompanied by "Maestro Paolo Pechi, Secretary of the Congregation of the Index," who lodged at La Minerva.

He knew that the Cenci ladies and Giacomo were in prison; for one reason, certain women had come to him with money to have masses said. But since then he had not spoken of their incarceration, either with Olimpio or Signora Lodovica. On the contrary, except for Lodovica, he did not know "any man or woman of the Cenci family, or even of their kin." He did not even know why Vittoria was in the Cenci dwelling. He had not inquired of others, nor of Vittoria herself; for "she could not have told, being but a girl."

It was true that he had twice seen Plautilla, at Rome and at Anticoli; but he had spoken of nothing in particular. He had gone to Anticoli to see his kinsman, "who was sick unto death." It was also true that both before and after going there he had seen Olimpio in the church of La Minerva; but that was by mere chance! As was natural, he had frequently invited his brother to share a meal, in company with his kinsman, Michele, and with Papirio, whom he had met on the Anticoli road and brought back to Rome with him. But they had eaten in his own room, nowhere but in his own room, and he had given them the convent fare.

"Did Olimpio sleep as well as dine in the monastery?"

"I think that he slept one night or two in my room. . . . He used to come to Rome on business of his own and sometimes he would go to the inn, and sometimes he would sleep in my room." In any case, his brother had never spoken to him of the affairs of the Cenci, nor had he said that he was embroiled in any crime, nor that he had gone far off to a castle where "a misfortune overtook him." He had said not a word about anything: so true was this that he, a poor friar, did not even know why the Cenci were in prison!

There was no letter in his cell, "except such as may have been set there by some one to do him hurt." So many people entered there!

The judge then showed him a letter discovered in his cell, which began: "Very Magnificent signor kinsman," and closed with: "Fr. Pietro Calvetto." On the back it bore the address: "To the Very Magnificent Signore kinsman, Sig. Giovanni Francesco Calvetto in Anticoli. Fra' Pietro looked it up and down and said: "I have never received this, nor sent it to any one." Another letter was shown him, without address or signature. Said he: "I have never received it, nor had this writing brought to me from any man." Besides, he repeated, "I cannot read."

"Do you know Fra' Bastone?"

Yes, he knew him. Fra' Bastone was the nickname of a Fra' Giacomo, a Tuscan, who lived at Santa Maria Maggiore, and who looked after "the Penetentiaries in that church." Witness had been in Rome for six or seven years, now in that church, now at La Minerva, where he had lodged in many different cells. "In La Minerva I have only one room, and all the friars have only one room each. . . . It is indeed true that I have had the keys of three or four rooms. After the flood damaged the sacristy it was found necessary to have the vestments brought from the sacristy into three or four other rooms to preserve them from the water."

With regard to Fra' Bastone, witness declared that he had never received from him nor given to him "any note or writing from any person."

Moscato took a third letter from among his papers; he passed it to Fra' Pietro, who turned it round and round between fingers and thumb, and then said: "I know not what this half sheet may be, if Your Honour do not read it to me."

The judge then passed it to the notary to be read aloud. It began: "My very dear brother, will you give . . ." It closed with the words: "from home."

"I have well understood; . . . and I say that I have

never received that writing, nor any message, and I know not what it may be."

Then let Fra' Pietro understand that this letter and the two others were found in his bed!

At this blunt and harsh statement of Moscato, Fra' Pietro stood confused. But then, with an air of chiding himself for his lapse of memory, he cried: "Now I remember! That note was sent me by Padre Fra' Tommaso, father penitentiary at Santa Maria Maggiore; and he sent it to me . . . to say that I should give Fra' Bastone a piece of taffeta, for he wished to use it for a praying-stool, and he said I had promised it to him." And now that a key to his memory had been found, he continued: "If it please you, tell me what is contained in that other letter which you have shown me, and what the superscription says, and I shall be able to tell you what it is." The words were read: "To the very Magnificent Signore kinsman, Sig. Giovanni Francesco Calvetto in Anticoli."

Said Fra' Pietro: "I said one day to a layman who was in the sacristy of La Minerva—I know him by sight, but I do not know his name—I said: 'If it please you, write me a letter to a kinsman of mine who is named Giovan Francesco de Alessandri of Antocoli.' And the layman said to me: 'What would you have me write him?' And I said to write to him that I had received his letters, and I was well. And so this layman wrote that in the sacristy, and he sealed it. Then afterwards I brought it to my room. But the school-master who lives over against Li Greci, and who is from Anticoli and had promised to carry it for me, did not come to get it." Therefore, witness added, he had retained it; and on having it read to him, he perceived that in the address the name "Calvetto" was written in error for "Alessandri." He had not forwarded the letter on account of this confusion, and also "because it was not well written inside."

At this point the examination was adjourned. All were tired; the friar through the strain of justifying so many statements by erecting a complicated structure of lies

around each evasion; the Court through listening to his answers. The notary finally was worn out from recording so many pages of testimony. But what Fra' Pietro might know and tell interested the authorities so vitally that they could not long postpone his further examination. It was resumed after a few hours' recess.

"What do you mean by the words: 'We shall soon see the end of the business'?"

"I tell your Honour that he who wrote that letter did not write it well; for I meant that the Signore and the Signora were well."

"What Signore and Signora?"

"Signore Marzio and Signora Giulia Colonna."

To other comments Fra' Pietro replied: "That letter was not written well." Did they wish proof? Even the address was an error, Calvetto being written for Alessandri!

But the judge suspected that the error was intentional, made to provide against any chance of the letter's being intercepted.

Meanwhile the friar repeated that he had alluded to Marzio Colonna because Colonna had certain lawsuits in Naples, concerning which Alessandri wished information; and he had mentioned Signora Giulia because Plautilla wished to return to La Petrella, and it had been Alessandri's advice that it would be well to make a plea to Donna Giulia.

"But," asked Moscato again, "what has all this to do with the words written in the letter?" And Fra' Pietro again persisted that the man who wrote the letter for him had explained himself ill.

"Then why did you not tear it up, especially as the address as well was in error?"

The friar sought for pretexts and excuses; but Moscato told him sternly that the actual truth was that he was referring to the matter of the Cenci, and to his harbouring of his brother, Olimpio.

Fra' Pietro answered that truly the letter might, by a curious chance, be so interpreted. But if he had made

any such allusion, he would have confessed it. Had he ever concealed the fact that he had lodged Olimpio in his own room and given him food and a bed? In his own room, he repeated, and in no other, for it was he himself who had gone to sleep for the time being "in a guest-room, as no one was using it." Anyway it was not possible for two to sleep together, "as in the convent beds are small and hardly big enough for one!"

He continued his lies. When he had departed for Anticoli he had left Olimpio behind him in Rome, but did not know where he lodged. He had returned to Rome, and in the morning, after sleeping with Papirio in Signor Diomede's quarters in the Borghese palace, he had returned to the convent, and he had found Olimpio near his cell. . . .

Moscato interrupted, calling upon him to tell the truth, but Fra' Pietro pursued: "I found him in the dormitory, not within my own cell, nor in another chamber. Afterwards I opened my room door, and Olimpio entered in, and seated himself on my bed to rest. And on my telling him that Michele had come with Papirio, and that they were in La Minerva hearing mass, he said to me: 'Have him come here to me for a little.' And I shut the chamber door which shuts of itself without locking; and without shutting it quite I went and found Michele and Papirio and led them within, and they shut the door again, and I left them there talking together, and I went into the sacristy to do my usual work." Afterwards he had returned to the cell and had found the three still there. They had eaten and talked together, but he had never heard Olimpio speak of what had happened to him at Novellara.

Moscato accused the witness of hiding the truth; the other shrugged his shoulders and returned: "If Solomon should come here, I could say no different to what I have heard."

"Have a care! It is testified that you were present when Olimpio told this tale."

"It may be so; but I cannot affirm that I have heard

it." He repeated these words frequently, and attempted to lead the Court into a description of the room where he had eaten with his brothers and relatives; he became confused in a discussion as to whether or no the chamber door was locked; then embarked afresh upon a sea of lies. He spoke of the horse on which he had journeyed to Anticoli, whither Olimpio also had gone a few days later, as he learned. He did not even know that Olimpio had ever dwelt in the Cenci palace!

The judge cut him short: "Why, even though he was your brother, did you shelter one who was proclaimed an assassin by all men? Why did you hide him and shield him from justice, in defiance of Bulls issued by Sixtus the Fifth and other pontiffs?" [1]

"My lord, truly I did not know that Olimpio was charged with guilt and was a delinquent; however if Your Honour wishes me to say that I knew it, I will say that I knew it."

The sarcasm latent in such an answer offended Moscato, who nevertheless mastered himself. Yet the air grew heavy with menace. The friar was floundering in denials and concealments. "I do not recall if any relative of mine, man or woman, at Anticoli, asked me why Olimpio and his wife, Plautilla, and his family were driven from La Petrella. . . . I do not recall having said to any relative of mine at Anticoli, nor yet to Giovan Francesco Alessandri, that I had gone expressly to Anticoli because Olimpio desired to go there to his wife and I was to learn if they would be content to see him."

The Court, tired and exasperated, remanded Fra' Pietro to his prison.

On the following morning, June 22d, Moscato and Molella came early to Corte Savella with the notary. A black day was preparing for the friar. He resumed his tactics of making occasional concessions to the questioning, but, even as he yielded, weaving for himself a new fabric of lies!

For example, he admitted that he had put Olimpio in

1 "Contra formam bullæ Sixti Quinti et aliorum Pontificum."

Fra' Giuliano's cell, not his own. Yet he had been a thousand leagues from the thought of hiding him; "for Olimpio used often to come to La Minerva, and he would also go to inns in Rome to eat, and he was seen by many." It might well be that he had spoken to Alessandri about Olimpio; but his sole reason for going to Anticoli was to see his sick kinsman. Very likely he had said that on his journey thither he had ridden the grey horse which Agostino had in fact used, except at the beginning; but he begged to observe that one may easily confuse two horses. And when he was warned that Alessandri would tell him to his face that he had come to Anticoli for no other purpose than to learn if Olimpio might repair there, he replied: "I will be able to tell you if he speaks truly: my memory is good."

Giovan Francesco Alessandri's deposition of June 13th was then read to him. Fra' Pietro said that "it might be granted" that his kinsman had so understood him; but he personally did not recall it being "precisely thus." To better convict the friar of mendacity, Alessandri was summoned; he affirmed bluntly: "When this friar came from Rome to Anticoli, he told me that Olimpio was here in Rome, and he told me that Olimpio would come to my house if I were willing; and I said to him: 'Let him come; who hinders him?'"

Then Fra' Pietro cast aside all he had said a few minutes before, admitting: "All that he says is the truth!"

Moscato ordered Alessandri to be taken back to his cell; then he turned angrily to the friar, who so strangely denied his own evidence. The friar replied humbly: "I wish to tell the truth . . . for I am resolved to tell it." And all at once he actually did begin to tell it.

First he declared that he had gone to Anticoli on a horse of Giacomo Cenci,[1] the same horse that on his return he had delivered to Olimpio. He was asked if he would be able to recognise it should he see it. He affirmed that he would. Moscato ordered that the horse be removed from the stable of the Cenci and brought to

[1] As we have seen, the horse belonged to Bernardo.

the via Montoro, beneath the windows of the court room. When the horse was brought, Fra' Pietro was taken to the window; he said: "That is the horse I rode." The beast was led back to its stable.

He then admitted that Olimpio had told him on his return from Novellara how Rosati had attempted to poison him. The friar repeated the story as he had heard it, with all its details.

He became a little restive when asked by the judge about the cell at La Minerva, where he had kept Olimpio, and about the visits paid to Olimpio by his relatives, and finally about Olimpio's meals. He did not remember. But when Papirio was again summoned and had repeated his previous deposition, the friar took back his words, saying: "I have heard what Papirio says, and it is all true." He made one exception only: "Papirio has erred in this: Olimpio ate with us both morning and evening."

The examination was then adjourned, but was resumed in the afternoon with ever stricter and more ominous questions.

"What do you know of the murder of the Cenci and of Olimpio's participation in the crime?"

Fra' Pietro had "heard it said well nigh throughout Rome . . . that the sons and the daughter" had procured their father's death, and that Olimpio had done the deed "at their instance." But he had not had even the slightest revelation from Olimpio himself, nor did he believe the story.

"Then why did you take him in, hide him, furnish him victuals, make arrangements for his flight to Anticoli, aid him to elude the Court, and seek yourself to confuse the Court as concerns the horses, the letters, and the cells? Tell the truth, if you would avoid the torture!"

Abject and terrified, the poor friar stammered some excuses, concluding: "Signore, I know naught else than what I have said; and when I have once said a thing which was not true, straightway have I said that which was true; and if you would put me to the rack, here I am."

"*Visa pertinacia praedicti constituti, visa gravitate et*

enormitate delicti et facinoris," [1] Moscato ordered that Fra' Pietro be conducted "*ad locum tormentatorum*," stripped, bound, attached to the rack, and then "*interrogatus et benigne monitus ut veritatem fateatur.*" [2] But he persisted: "What I know, I have spoken. . . . I can say naught else."

He was hoisted.

"Oh, oh, oh! I know nothing, I know nothing, I know nothing, signore, oh, signore. . . ."

"*Deinde dixit alta voce:* [3] 'Jesu, Jesu, alas, alas! I know nothing, I know nothing, I know nothing! Signore, oh, oh, signore mio; oh, Jesu, what a death, what a death! I know nothing! Signore, oh, Jesu, oh, Jesu!'"

He was urged to reveal what he knew of the crime, and replied: "I know nothing of it, save what I have said; I know naught else." He was silent an instant. "*Deinde dixit*: 'What a death, what a death! I know nothing, nothing, nothing, signore; I know nothing. Glorious Virgin, Thou knowest well that I am thy servant, and Thou wilt aid me. Oh, signore, I know nothing, or I would tell it. I have said all that I knew.' *Et tacuit, deinde dixit*: 'O God, O God, O God!' *et tacuit; et cum tacuisset per aliquantulum temporis spatium dixit:* [4] 'I shall die here!' *Deinde dixit alta voce*: 'Alas, what a death, what a death, what a death!' And was silent again."

When counselled to tell the whole truth in order to avoid more torture, "he answered: 'I know nothing; I cannot say other than what I have said; enough, enough!' He was silent awhile, then cried out: [5] 'Signore, you are killing me! Here I stand!' *In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum.* 'I know nothing, signore. Oh,

[1] In view of the pertinacity of the aforementioned witness, and in view of the gravity and enormity of the crime and deliction.

[2] Interrogated and admonished in all kindness to confess the truth.

[3] "Then he said in a loud voice. . . ."

[4] And was silent; and when he had been silent for a little space of time he said . . .

[5] "Et tacuit: deinde dixit." The phrase, as will be seen, is repeated throughout the written minutes of Fra' Calvetti's ordeal.

Fra' Pietro, I am a sinner; oh, Fra' Pietro, the bells are ringing, say the Pater noster; here I am.' *Et tacuit, deinde dixit:* 'Signore, I know naught else . . . nothing . . . nothing.' *Et tacuit, deinde dixit:* 'God be praised!' "

He was upbraided for his efforts to becloud and hide the truth, in order to lead justice astray, also for his unwillingness to tell all he knew. He replied: "I know naught else; here I am, Lord." *Et tacuit, deinde dixit*: "Oh, sir, I know nothing; oh, let me down, signore, I know nothing." *Et tacuit, deinde dixit*: "Oh, signore, for the love of God, I have said what I knew; I know nothing, let me down, I am dead; let me down, I am dead; I know naught else, and though you hold me thus forever, I can say naught else; oh! oh! oh! let me down, for I know nothing!" *Et tacuit, deinde dixit*: "You are killing me; I know nothing, nothing, nothing. Oh, wretched, wretched me! I know nothing. I have told the truth." *Et monitus per Dominum ad veritatem fatendam.*[1] "I can not say other than what I have said." *Et tacuit, deinde dixit*: "Oh, signore, by God's love; I know naught else, signore, naught else, signore."

Moscato ordered at this point that Fra' Pietro be set down gently (*"leviter"*—what a charming solicitude!) and unbound, that his dislocated arms be settled in place, that he be again clothed in his cassock, and reconducted to his solitary cell.

According to the cold record of the notary, he had been racked for three quarters of an hour: *per tres partes unius horae.* The time was reckoned on this occasion by the water-clock, not by muttering prayers.

The friar's remarkable constancy under torture arose not merely from toughness of physical fibre; but also from his promise to Cesare Cenci that he would not speak. He was, further, convinced that if he should reveal that he knew of the crime from Olimpio's own lips, he would ruin himself as well as the Cenci. It was one thing to shelter a

[1] Being admonished in God's name to confess the truth.

person who was the subject of rumours, however sinister; it was another thing to harbour a confessed assassin. Assuredly it was some excuse that the individual was his brother; but on the other hand, the robe and the vows of the monkish order compromised him in the face of the judicial authority, which was at the same time both civil and religious. Even without his confession the case of the "*Signori*" seemed conclusive; but certainly the friar's revelations furnished new elements, certain and direct. His testimony was of great importance to the prosecution, for from him could be had something which might take the place of Olimpio's direct confession, which the Court had lost through the negligence of its own officers and the intrigues of Monsignore Guerra.

The wary Cesare Cenci had been fully acquainted with Marzio Catalano's confessions and with Plautilla's "bad turn"; he had been certain that the friar would be taken into custody next. He had sped to the monk, as we know, and had told him that all that had occurred up to that moment was "nothing," and that now "everything" depended upon him. Cesare had concluded: "You will be taken; heed well that you confess nothing!" And the arrest had followed two hours after!

But during the night following his dreadful day of torture the friar, lying on the filthy pallet of his filthy cell, his bones and muscles racked with pain, meditated on his situation. Whether because he saw that all resistance was vain or because he was assailed by conscientious scruples, it is certain that he decided to "come clean." When he was reconducted before the Court on the morning of June 23d, his first words to the Most Illustrious and Excellent Signor Moscato were: "Signore, I wish to say the truth about all that you have asked of me. I will not suffer more for any man."

Then: "What I know of the facts of the death of Signor Francesco is what I shall say forthwith. My brother, Olimpio, confessed to me that he murdered Signor Francesco Cenci at the instance and by the order of Signor Giacomo Cenci; and he told me that the ladies

of Signor Francesco, that is, his wife and his daughter, Signora Beatrice, were also embroiled in it; but the precise order came from Signor Giacomo Cenci, who had given it to Olimpio and had promised him two thousand scudi to dower Vittoria, Olimpio's daughter, who is now [June 23d] in Signor Giacomo's house. And Signor Giacomo gave this order and promise when Olimpio was in Rome before Signor Francesco's death. And all this he told me twice, once in my cell when he returned from Lombardy, and the other time also in that same room, in the presence of Signor Cesare Cenci." It was on this occasion that Olimpio had fallen "into great frenzy and anger."

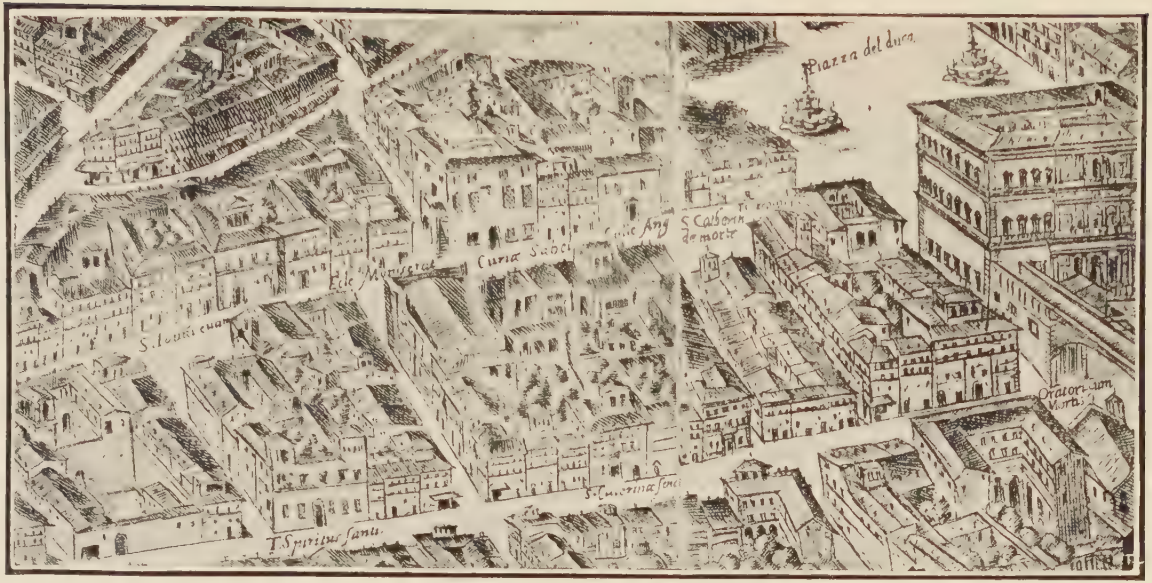
To follow Fra' Pietro step by step through his rehearsal of the facts would cause us to linger too long over matters that the reader already knows. Enough that he related in minutest detail Olimpio's journey to Novellara, and Camillo Rosati's "treachery," his return to Rome and his fury against Rosati, which was prompted not so much by Rosati's attempt to kill him, and by the theft of his money, as by Rosati's removal from his finger of his ring, the gift of Beatrice. Olimpio had promised in return to tear the ring from Rosati's finger, even though it should be needful to slay its wearer into the bargain. Fra' Olimpio then described his journey with the relic of St. Vincent to the bedside of the dying Paolo; he told what had happened in the two cells of La Minerva when Olimpio was hidden there; he reported Olimpio's dialogues and agreements with Cesare Cenci in regard to clothing, money, and horses; he then told of his own journey and that of his brother to Anticoli; he spoke of the money given him by Lodovica Cenci for Plautilla and for Olimpio. He revealed the many appeals that had come to him from Giacomo and the ladies, through the intermediary of Carlo of Bertinoro, soldier in the Castello, to learn Olimpio's whereabouts and to urge Fra' Pietro to persuade Olimpio to immediate flight. Finally he related his own trips to the Castello and his conversations with Messer Amerigo Capponi and with Lucrezia Cenci. His last

words concerned Marzio Catalano's complicity in the crime, which Olimpio had been reluctant to commit and which had been forced upon him by the "gentlewomen"; the women also had later dissuaded Olimpio from killing Catalano, as Olimpio had purposed in order to get rid of such a dangerous babbler.

When the witness was asked why he had not confessed all this sooner, he replied: "I would not say it yesterday on the rack, nor would I say it in my other examinations, for Your Honour frightened me by saying that I had contravened Papal bulls by receiving Olimpio in Minerva convent; and I feared that it might go ill with me if I were not dumb about this and other matters that I have told to-day, such as having kept Olimpio and lent a hand in getting money and other things and sending them to Olimpio, and about dealing with others who were working for him. But to-day I have told the truth because I do not wish to suffer for any man."

Through the testimony wrung from the friar the Court was now cognisant of all the intrigues that were being conducted by Giacomo Cenci and the two women—between the Castel Sant' Angelo and the outer world. It had learned of their sending of messages and news by means of soldiers and servants, of the visits and information they received, the complaisant blindness to everything of the vice-castellan. Moscato directed that Lucrezia and Beatrice should be immediately transferred from the Castel Sant' Angelo to Corte Savella. The removal took place on the same day, June 23d. But hardly had Lucrezia arrived in her new prison than she sought to knit up the broken threads connecting her with the outside world. She was discovered, and steps were taken to put an end to an abuse which had been so favoured in the Castello.

On June 25th, Fra' Pietro was interrogated anew. He confirmed what he had already said; then he gave information concerning the conversations he had had with Lodovica. She had wished to learn where Olimpio was in



Corte Savella in 1593

hiding. He told of his talk with Cesare, who had urged him, in case of arrest, to lie. He also spoke of the velvet costume which Beatrice had had made for Olimpio and which was in the Montecitorio monastery.

He repeated that he had not confessed immediately because, having received Olimpio, "who was a delinquent, into sacred places," he feared that his case might fall under the provisions of the bull. But now he was telling the truth.

To see if he was quite settled in that "truth," Moscato had him brought to the torture-chamber, stripped, bound, and tied to the rack. Fra' Pietro re-affirmed his words. This was not sufficient. He was hoisted and held suspended for the space of two Misereres; he confirmed everything.

Lucrezia, confined in Corte Savella, was interrogated between the 26th and the 29th. She persisted as usual in her irrational denials. Her ignorance on every subject was complete. It was not true that she had sent or received messages, either when she was in the Castello, or now at Corte Savella. Asked the age of the soldier who guarded her in the Castello, she replied: "I know not if he was young or old; it seems to me that he was of middle age; I know not how old he might have been; I took no heed of such things."

It might well be that she had spoken "of that incarceration," but with whom she did not remember. It might also be that she had complained of being imprisoned, but only "on account of the room where I was." Now she sighed for that room, for at least "one could see from it the courtyard, through which one could watch folk passing!" She had asked no news of Olimpio, "not if he were alive or dead, nor where he was nor what he might be doing."

She stated that she did not know if Olimpio had relatives in Rome; then it seemed to her that he had a brother who was a friar, whose name she did not know, though she had seen him once at La Petrella and again in Rome when he had brought the relic to Paolo. She

thought that Olimpio had also a sister, but knew nothing of her.

"Have you not spoken of Olimpio to the friar, in the Castel Sant' Angelo?"

"I tell Your Honour that I have never seen that friar while I have been prisoner in the Castello. How would Your Honour have me speak of Olimpio there and of others, if I have not seen them?"

"Fra' Pietro has made this statement to the Court."

"Does this friar say mass? If he says mass, then that is the only time he tells the truth."

Fra' Pietro was introduced. He shrugged his shoulders and exclaimed: "How would Your Honour have it that the like of me would make up such matters out of his head? It is true—true!" He repeated his tale of Lucrezia's surreptitious call to him, and of her interrogation as he stood by the barred window in the upper court of the Castello.

Lucrezia wildly denied everything. Worse followed when she was informed that the friar had said she was an accomplice in the crime. "This friar was not there and never saw him [Francesco], nor did he hear of it when my husband died; it is not true! And the other witnesses say that I had no knowledge of such a thing; and I did not cause it to be done; it is not true—I tell you it is not true, and he lies in his throat about everything." She continued to rave until the Court, in weariness, remanded her to her room.

Meanwhile another provision was made which removed from Lucrezia and Beatrice all facilities for corresponding with the world outside Corte Savella. Beginning on the 28th, their food and that of the two women (one apiece) who waited on them was provided at the expense of the Captain. Thus the domestic staff of the Cenci household was prevented from idling through the prison and speaking with the soldiers and with the ladies as well.

"At the expense of the Captain" is the phrase contained in the "Register of Victuals supplied to the Cenci in their Imprisonment," still preserved in the Archives of

the Roman State. But "at the expense of the Captain" is only an approximation to truth; the Captain merely kept the accounts, to reimburse himself later from the Cenci or from their heirs, or from the civil authorities. The register bears as its title: "Book wherein are written all the expenditures made for the Cenci and others in the same case by order of the Lord Prosecutor [Pompeo Molella] and Signor Ulisse [Moscato]." It begins: "Day of June 28, 1599. Signora Lucrezia began to be rationed at the expense of the Captain with one serving-woman.

"*Lunch.*	Tarantello [1]	soldi 12
	claret	" 12
	fish	" 15
	bread and salad	" 6
	candles	" 3
Dinner.	claret	" 16
	fish	" 10
	tarantello	" 10
	anchovy	" 5
	fruit	" 10
	bread and minestra	" 6"

On the same day the recording of food for Beatrice and her maid also began. It was approximately the same as that for Lucrezia, and in the same quantity.

The document, however interesting, is too long and uniform to be reproduced here entire. We shall record later Beatrice's last meal, on September 10, 1599; here it is enough to say that the prisoners' food was varied and abundant: veal, mutton, pigeons, pullets, *beccafichi*,[2] milk puddings, milk-cheeses, sausages, ham, fish of many kinds, salads; even pastries and little pies and scroll-edged tarts melons and other fruit covered with snow during the great heats. Their wine was *greco* and claret.

[1] Part of the tunny-fish.

[2] Small birds esteemed a great delicacy at this period: the "snap-figs" of Elizabethan writers (c.f. Florio's "Montaigne").

In the supply of food to Beatrice a gap is to be noted which extends from July 6th to August 10th inclusive. Since no leaves are missing from the account book, it is clear that during that period the family was again providing for her.

The Captain rationed Giacomo "together with two guards," beginning on August 7th; and Bernardo, "with one guard," received the prison food after August 9th. But in their case, the provision of food was discontinued after the 16th of the same month.

It seems to us probable that these precautions are related to periods during which the authorities had reason to suspect the prisoners of corresponding with individuals outside the prison and receiving notes hidden in the food, or of speaking with those who delivered it. The food for Giacomo and Bernardo, who were under closer surveillance, was furnished by the Captain during only a few days. For Beatrice, who gave less trouble, or, if one prefers, was more wary, the prison meals were suspended for a month. But for babbling and imprudent Lucrezia the precaution never ceased during all the days of life that remained to her!

CHAPTER XXIV

THE FLIGHT OF MONSIGNORE

The testimony of Fra' Pietro had serious consequences for Cesare Cenci. He was interrogated on June 29, 1599, and then confined in Tordinona.

"I do not know," he said, "why they have taken me back to prison, since I have been released under bond!"

He had heard of the arrest of certain relatives of Olimpio, including his wife; he professed to know none of them. He had also heard of the incarceration of servants of Giacomo, among them one Cesare [Bussone]; he knew not who the fellow might be. He had spoken in the Chapter-room of La Minerva with Fra' Pietro, and had also seen him six or seven times in Giacomo's house. When he had spoken to the friar in La Minerva, it was to ask him "to learn the amount of the dowry of a widow named Verginia . . . who lives behind the little door of La Minerva; for there was talk of her marriage to a neighbour of his named Messer Biagio, a notary, it being understood that this widow had a very fine dowry." Then, fearing that the Court might conceive the idea of summoning Messer Biagio, he quickly added: "I did this without the knowledge of that notary!" Otherwise he had never spoken to Fra' Pietro "in any room of the convent."

He affirmed repeatedly that he had never lent the friar any horse, whether his own, Giacomo's, or Bernardo's. "Only three times have I taken horses of the aforementioned, after their incarceration, and that was to go to villages." He had not even looked for horses in the inns of Rome, nor could he recall any muleteer or carter by the name of Agostino: "one gives pennies to carters: one does not seek to know their names." He had not spoken of Plautilla with any one after her arrest, far less expressed any regret at her seizure. As for Olimpio, he

had never concerned himself with the man's affairs, had not concealed him, and had not sent him away; nor had he seen Olimpio at La Minerva nor elsewhere. He did not even know if Olimpio was alive or dead.

Fra' Pietro was introduced. Cesare Cenci then raised an objection: "I protest that I should not be brought to a close examination nor to any action to my prejudice without first being allowed to prepare my defence and having my case discussed." But Molella, State Prosecutor, ruled that the examination should continue.

The friar therefore reaffirmed all he had deposed, and again related all that had taken place in his cell between himself and Olimpio in the presence of Cesare Cenci.

Said Cenci: "I intend to convict him of lying, and so I shall do at the fit time and place; and to that end I repeat my protest."

The friar embarked on a flood of details; Cenci merely insisted: "I reply with my protest, that I wish to be heard in full court, nor do I wish this friar to make a repetition of his interrogatory."

On the following morning the Court assembled in the Cenci palace to subject Lodovica to a second examination. She sought to baffle the judge, not only hiding what she knew, but insinuating new lies. For example, though she knew well that Cesare Bussone had been arrested for the Cantalice crime, she feigned complete ignorance, declaring: "I have indeed heard it said that he was arrested for cause, and that it was a charge of assault upon a vermicelli-maker."

"Do you know why Cesare Bussone left the city? Do you know where he went?"

Lodovica had heard from him that he had gone to the seven churches. He had left on April 11th, very early; she had not seen him afterwards until the morning . . . nay, it was "late in the evening" of the following day. She had said to him: "You have been very slow in returning." To this he had replied: "I have been detained and have delayed on account of some work to be performed." Lodovica said that she had asked him no more, "for it is

my nature that when a servant asks me leave to do some work, I say no more to him."

With reference to the horse that Bussone had ridden, she said that she did not know if he had taken it from her stable, or in that case, which of the two "coach-horses" it was: the black one or the other, Signor Bernardo's mount. She had herself later sold the black "for the price of 28 scudi to a muleteer." As usual, she did not know his name.

With respect to Cesare's second trip, she could not say whether or no he had gone to Lorcto. Certainly he had asked permission to go to Loreto before leaving. And he had returned "with rosaries, and images of the Madonna of Loreto in his hat." She had also seen him "pull forth his pocket-handkerchief and take out some sort of rosary."

"You know well that Bussone went neither to the seven churches nor to Loreto!"

She replied that she had some doubt about his trip to the seven churches, on account of his tardy return; but she had none about his journey to Loreto.

She did not know where Olimpio might be, and added: "Yes, Signore, I have in my house a daughter of Olimpio; her name is Vittoria; she is now at the school-mistress's learning to sew and to read." And if Fra' Pietro had frequently come to her house, it was exclusively to see his little niece and speak to her; except, of course, the time when he had brought the relic of St. Vincent to Paolo's bedside.

She had never lent horses to Fra' Pietro. She had indeed sometimes lent them to uncle Cesare. "I have also lent the horses of our establishment to Monsignore Guerra, because I had orders from Giacomo and Bernardo, when they went to prison, that if Monsignore Guerra sent here for carriages, horses, or the whole house, I should answer him nothing, but should give them to any emissary of his who might come in his name. And so have I done, every time that he has sent."

She then denied to the Court that she had ever sent to

Fra' Pietro or to any one else any money to be consigned to Olimpio with an exhortation to him to flee. That part of the friar's testimony treating of the ten scudi first given by her and the forty given later was read to her. But she declared it all false. The Court observed that these were the friar's very words. She replied, shortly and brusquely: "It may be that he said them under torture."

During these very days an *avviso* to the Court of Urbino, after stating that new bronze doors with the arms of Clement VIII were being installed in the gateway of the Castel Sant' Angelo, goes on to state that on June 28th Giacomo had been removed from that fortress to the Corte Savella, to be submitted to a confrontation with the friar. It does not appear from other documents that Giacomo was ever set on the stand with Fra' Pietro. Yet the other news given in this *avviso* is correct; it announces the imprisonment of the "Dominican friar," that friar's hospitality to Olimpio in La Minerva, and the death of Olimpio.

Francesco Maria Vialardo, on the contrary, the secret agent of the Grand Duke, informed his master ill. He joined to the news of the confessions of Fra' Pietro and Plautilla other false information, such as the infliction upon the friar of the torture known as "la veglia."

Fra' Pietro's torture had been long and painful, but it had not included the *veglia*. It has been said that the inventor of the *veglia*, Girolamo Menghino of Siena, was rewarded by the "maledictions of his contemporaries and perpetual infamy in ages to come." [1] But why should our loathing for the fiend in human shape who devised such a torture for his fellow-men not include the tribunals which adopted it and the governments which permitted it?

This horrible ordeal consisted of an apparatus of ropes, belts, hooks and pulleys which held an unfortunate suspended above a tripod called "la Veglia," [2] whence its

[1] Adinolfi: *Il Canale di Ponte*, p. 14.
[2] The Vigil.

The Torture Known as "la Veglia"

name. The hapless sufferer was first completely shaven. The belts were fastened tightly round his chest; the ropes pulled at his arms, bound together behind his head. His feet were lashed to a bar. On the stool was set a sharp stone. When this was touched by the victim's tense muscles, it gave him, at every slightest motion, spasms of unspeakable atrocity. An eye-witness, Giulio Cesare Magno, "chirurgeon of La Carità, for many years attendant at the tribunals of Rome," gives this description: "After the defendant is settled, the room is well shut, that is, the window is shut with cloths and boards, and a curtain is drawn across the door; and within this room are only the judge and the notary, and a small table with two lighted lamps." Then the subject, says Magno, is bound "with most loving care!" After hours of such torture, he is carried to his bed, and is fed chicken broth, fresh eggs, and good wine, and "for some days is treated in the manner of women in childbed." Further, if the torture-chamber is extremely cold, "a fire of wood-embers" is kindled behind the patient, at the due distance, and his stomach is warmed with heated cloths. "And this," concludes Magno with evident complacency, "is the rule which is followed in the Roman prisons for giving that torture called *la veglia*." [1]

Another confrontation between Cesare Cenci and the friar in Tordinona, on July 1st, did not shake either in his stand. Cenci again professed himself outraged by the procedure. He declared—rather than replied: "I repeat anew my protest in the manner and form I have made it on other occasions, that the truth of my case should be made evident in full court, and that advocates should prepare my case."

On July 11th Cesare Bussone underwent a third examination in the Corte Savella. After giving information about all his family, he constructed one of his familiar edifices of prevarication about the seven churches and his

[1] Pp. 43-45 of G. B. Scanaroli: *De Visitatione carceratorum* (Rome, 1675). See also *Theatrum Crudelitatum Haereticorum nostri temporis* (Antwerp, 1604).

journey to Loreto. But Moscato made few objections; he was not yet in possession of the depositions from witnesses at Piediluco, which were transcribed there and a copy of which did not reach Rome until July 18. Nor did Moscato yet possess the other depositions, made, as we have seen, in Corte Savella on the 16th and 17th of the same month. However, Bussone's false statement that he may have said to Tommaso Federici, the Cenci's steward, already mentioned, that he was setting forth to Loreto, brought several days' confinement upon the head of the luckless steward, who merely asserted that he knew nothing of it.

On July 13th Plautilla was again interrogated. She recounted Giacomo's fatal visit to the house of her kinswoman, Cilla, "after the flood had gone over Rome," his insistence that she should immediately quit Rome, and her meeting with her daughter, Vittoria, whom Beatrice had brought to the Capuchin church. She then testified: "The day after Signor Francesco's death I questioned the ladies more closely to learn how Signor Francesco's death had chanced. And I spoke to them both, they being in Signora Beatrice's room, and I asked how Marzio had gone about killing Signor Francesco. And then Signora Lucrezia said that Marzio entered the room in the morning early," as she was leaving it. She would not have him enter, but he thrust his way forward "with the rolling-pin," and "did the business." Then he had "dumped" the body "of Signor Francesco through the planking."

The 17th of June, four days later, was marked by an unexpected and sensational event: Monsignore Mario Guerra's flight from Rome. In view of the revelations of the trial, Cardinal Montalto's protection was unavailing; the Pope was determined to probe the matter to the bottom. The story goes that to make his escape Guerra induced a charcoal-seller to lend him his clothing, blackened his face and went on his way, crying his wares, driving his ass before him, and eating bread and onions.

But the story is pure legend; as false as the tale of his amours with Beatrice.

He took his departure, in fact, with apparent tranquillity. He was too well informed not to know that the order for his arrest, though it was imminent, had not yet been issued!

Dressed in his habitual black, he betook himself "about the 20th or 21st hour" to call upon Cardinal Sauli and another cardinal. He rode in Cardinal Montalto's coach; with him were Giovanni Lodovico Cellio of Narni, who acted as his man of affairs, a man-servant and the body-guard. At Porta San Lorenzo he took another carriage with six horses, which also belonged to Montalto. He took the road to Tivoli, with the servant, "a tiny French lackey named Claudio," and a footman. They were preceded by two other footmen "with two led horses of Cardinal Montalto" which had been sent ahead. He was followed by two mules with three "cellarets" of wine and a chest "in which was a cloak with certain necessary trifles, saucers and spoons." As may be perceived, far from being the flight of a solitary man disguised as a charcoal-seller it was a well-equipped expedition.

We reproduce his own words: "At Tivoli I dismounted at the inn in the Piazzo del Olmo, on the upper side of the piazza, and I supped there; then I went and slept in the house of a Knight of the Green Cross, whom a priest had bidden give me a bed. . . . The knight was a poor man who had only one old woman for servant in his house. . . . In the morning I departed from Tivoli on horseback with Flaminio [the bodyservant], and the carriage turned back; . . . and I went straight on to Celano." [1]

On the 22nd Cesare Bussone was brought again before Moscato and Molella.

Not knowing of the new information in the hands of

[1] This statement made on Dec. 22, 1602, by Monsignore Guerra himself corresponds with a statement in an *avviso* to the Court of Urbino, Aug. 14, 1599: "Monsignor Guerra had withdrawn outside of Rome under color of going to visit the state of Celano."

the tribunal, he began to retell his chaplet of lies with the utmost confidence. The first time, he said, he had gone to the seven churches, the second time to Loreto. "I went and returned always by the Roman road and never turned aside my steps and never altered my course." He then talked at length of his relatives of Piediluco; he constructed what seems to be a complete family tree of the Montani.

Moscato observed that it seemed to him that the witness must have seen his relatives recently. The other quickly responded that he had in fact seen his sister Virginia at Terni; she had come to the house of Marco Tullio to greet him; however he had not been in Piediluco that year, indeed he had been there only when a boy.

"Take care! The Court has other information."

Cesare repeated five times that he had not been in that village and had not seen those relatives "for many years."

The judge shifted to a different subject, a customary piece of judicial tactics.

"Do you know Fra' Pietro Calvetti, Olimpio's brother?"

No, he knew no brother of Olimpio, monk or layman. Cesare repeated this statement a good seven times, although the judge made an exact reference to the witness's visits to the Minerva monastery, to the errands he had done, the letters he had carried, and to the verbal messages he had reported. Since he persisted that all this was false, two individuals were brought to the stand, Basilio Quareno and Sante Montano. When the three were ranged side by side, the friar was introduced.

"Do you know Cesare Bussone?" the friar was asked.

"As if that were not Cesare of Terni . . . brother of Pacifico and Marco Tullio's kinsman!" The friar went directly to him.

Cesare made a great display of scorn and surprise: "I do not know this friar in any wise; I know not who he may be."

"What?" protested the other. "How can you say that you know me not?" He began to relate in minute detail how Cesare had come to La Minerva to ask of him, in

Monsignore Guerra's name, a letter to be brought to Olimpio; he told how the two had first met in Guerra's house. "Whence would you that I know these things? Would you have it that I could make them up out of my head if they were not true?"

Bussone declared that all was false.

Fra' Pietro was again examined, alone, the following morning. He gave a minute description of Olimpio's appearance and of his clothing on the day of his final departure. After this Bussone was once more summoned and adjured to tell the truth. He promised to do so; but began his new evidence with the declaration that he had not been in Piediluco for many years and that he did not know Giovan Paolo di Bonifacio, "public porter" of that village!

Giovan Antonio Marini of Tivoli and Giovan Antonio Saleri, Milanese, were introduced. The trio being formed, the judge brought in Giovan Paolo di Bonifacio and asked him to indicate Cesare.

"Yonder man is Cesare, Pacifico's brother. . . . I have seen him in Piediluco."

Bussone sought to brave it out: "Only tell me this, have you ever spoken to me?"

The other promptly rejoined: "I have not spoken to you, but I have seen you in Piediluco."

"Jesu! Jesu!" cried Cesare despairingly. But he persisted in denial.

He was then identified by "the Spaniard," inn-keeper at Piediluco. This witness cried out, at Bussone's contradiction: "What I have said I have said for the truth, and for the truth I wish to confirm and maintain it, and maintain it to hell if need be." He recalled his lively memory of Cesare, sitting on the stairs of the inn cellar.

A new trio was formed with Cesare, Nicola Botteini and Pietro Forestano. Properzio di Nicola, the ferryman on the lake, was then introduced. In his turn, he proceeded to identify Bussone positively. So, immediately after, did the fishmonger Ottavio Petti, on being faced with the same three.

Moscato stated his conclusion: "You went to Piediluco with your brother, Pacifico, your kinsman, Marco Tullio, and that man, unknown in those regions, who was later murdered and decapitated near Cantalice. Learn that in addition to the declarations you have heard, there are some others; there is even one of your cousin Drusilla. Hearken to it!"

"Drusilla likewise lies!"

To demonstrate that the Court possessed all the facts, Moscato described Cesare's journey with Marco Tullio, Pacifico and Olimpio, the crime, and the ghastly odyssey of the severed head.

"I have never been at Piediluco nor at Santa Susanna, and I know nothing of this at all."

Question followed question and denial denial. The stubborn witness was shown the striped white doublet which Olimpio had worn when he was killed. He said that he had never seen it.

He was taken to the rack and bound. The order was given him to confess the truth. He replied that he had already told it.

He was hoisted.

"Oh, oh, I die, I die!"

Then, after a brief silence: "Alas, I die, signore . . . let me down, by God's love; let me down, let me down, I will tell the truth!"

But truth was not in the man. After narrating the journey of the "wicked band" to the Cantalice inn, he continued:

"There we left Olimpio . . . and we heard some sort of noise, and we returned all three to Piediluco. . . . When we were at Cantalice inn . . . we met some fifteen or indeed a score of men armed with arquebuses and pistols, and they said to me and Olimpio and Marco Tullio and Pacifico, to each of us: 'Who are you? Who are you?' And so each of us told his name, and Olimpio also told his; and these men said to us: 'Be off!' And Olimpio, who made a start to flee, for he was on horseback, was seized by four of those armed men; and they

dismounted him from his horse and returned it to us, saying: 'Begone about your business!' And so we took the mare, and left Olimpio in the hands of these armed men; and when we had gone the length of a cross-bow shot, we heard a great noise in the direction of that place where we had left Olimpio, and we continued our journey. However I know not what the armed band may have done with Olimpio."

Moscato heard out this fantastic tale; then, taxing him with lying, he had the rope again drawn taut.

"Alas, alas! Let me down, for I would tell the truth!"

He confessed the missions confided to him in his various conversations with Fra' Pietro, the two journeys to Terni, and other details. But when he came to the murder of Olimpio, he again deviated from the facts: "At the Cantalice inn we fell into an ambush of those people, who methinks were of the Kingdom, or some other band. And they took captive all four of us . . . and they asked our names as I have said, and then they took Olimpio and dismounted him, and said to us: 'Begone; here, take your mare.' And the mare being given us, we went off toward Rieti; and when we were a cross-bow shot distant, we heard Olimpio's voice saying, 'Alas! Alas!' and uttering great screams; and we paused ere continuing our journey, and said among ourselves that those people must be murdering Olimpio; and that is all I know of that happening."

Bussone would not confess that the murder had been committed by himself, his brother, and his kinsman; whenever his narrative reached this point, he would shy like an unmanageable horse. But the Court was pitiless. It desired that he should recount the story of the Cantalice crime; it ordered that he be again hoisted, and kept him in frightful agony until he promised to tell the whole truth.

He was lowered, and again began his story, only to balk once more at the accustomed obstacle. He added new details, revealed some secondary episodes which had in fact occurred, ceased to insist that they had heard Olimpio's cries from a distance, admitted that they had been present

at his murder; but persisted that they had delivered Olimpio to a band of soldiers of the Kingdom. "We managed to bring Olimpio into the Kingdom . . . and below Cantalice inn . . . and there we found these people and put Olimpio into their hands and let them do their will . . . that Monsignore Guerra's command should be fulfilled, for the Cenci gentlefolk had told me to obey him. And we brought Olimpio to that inn . . . and there he was slain by those people, lying in ambush in a ruined house, and they had laid another ambush nearer by, from above the road. . . . Olimpio was hemmed about by soldiers and sought to flee, but he could not; and they laid hand on the mare's bridle and dismounted him, and set him on the ground, and cut off his head in our presence, that is, in the presence of Pacifico and me, for Marco Tullio aided in the killing with a hatchet; I know not if he had it from those people or if indeed he had brought it with him, hidden under his garments, but I had not seen it till now. And Olimpio said: 'Oh, Jesu! oh, Jesu!' and commended his spirit as best he could, but none took pity on him."

He was asked what had been done with the head.

"Marco Tullio told me that they brought it to Civitaducale, he and that armed band."

"Was there bad blood between yourself and Olimpio?"

"Olimpio was dear to us, to me and Marco Tullio and Pacifico. Marco Tullio took him into his house, and Pacifico went to the Madonna of Loreto with him."

"Then why did you kill him?"

"We were led to procure his death for several reasons: for one because I was servant to Signor Giacomo, Signor Bernardo, and Signora Beatrice Cenci, and they had told me that I should do whatever Monsignore Guerra commanded me; and for another, because I desired to do a thing so pleasing to that monsignore, who sought me out concerning it; and he said that I should tell Marco Tullio in his name that if it should fare ill with Olimpio . . . he would give a hundred scudi to Marco Tullio, who was poor and had a wife and children." He continued that

Guerra had wanted the murder done in order that Olimpio might not give testimony against the Cenci, as he would surely do "if he should fall into the power of the Court."

On July 25th, 26th, 28th and 29th Bussone underwent further examinations. In the first he said: "All that" is not true "which I have confessed and deposed, about knowing that an armed band was there at the Cantalice inn, for in truth I did not know it. And it is not true that Monsignore Guerra had told me that armed men would be there, and that Marco Tullio and I should put him in their hands and we should let them do the deed. But it is indeed true that he told me that we should look well to bringing Olimpio to that inn; and there he was murdered, and that is truth." He then resumed his refrain: "He was slain by that armed band which lay there in ambush." Again he contradicted his words of the second day before: "I did not see when they were killing him; but I did hear screams, because I had turned back together with Pacifico."

In his examination of the 26th he upset another affirmation of the previous day. Guerra had said to him "that they would find men at the inn, and they should give Olimpio into the men's hands and let them do the deed."

The Court was irritated at these brazen attempts to hoodwink justice. But the witness went on: "These men were armed with arquebuses and short weapons like dirks and daggers, and they used the short weapons to kill Olimpio . . . for these people made a ring about Olimpio, and struck him blows with their weapons, as did Marco Tullio with his hatchet." The witness again abandoned the version that he and Pacifico "had turned back" and had left; he now said: "Pacifico and I were near by there and were afraid and did not look to see in what part of the body he was struck, and it was hard to see well owing to the interference of those people who were round about him, and because it was an hour and a half before day; but the arms could be seen from their shining."

On the 28th, after more muddled testimony, he per-

ceived on the faces of his judges the menace of further torture. He begged: "Mercy, let me be; I have the fever, and I commend my case to Your Honours."

He was then directed to speak once more of Olimpio's death. He no longer said that he was near by, and that only the cluster of soldiers hindered him from seeing the murder; he declared once more that he and Pacifico were "a cross-bow shot distant."

The angry judge again had Bussone attached to the rack; the witness cried: "The truth is . . . that I was present when Olimpio was killed, and those present were Marco Tullio, Pacifico, and those soldiers I told of."

He was hoisted, and cried: "Alas, alas, I die! . . . Let me down, let me down!" He spoke again of the soldiers, and of the rewards promised; he denied that Marco Tullio, Pacifico and he had revealed to the relatives in Piediluco their purpose in regard to Olimpio. "Not even to Uncle Onofrio," he twice repeated. A few minutes after the judge asked him how there could have been time enough to warn the soldiers of the Kingdom to assemble below Cantalice. He replied: "We sent our uncle, Giovan Onofrio, to bear word to those armed men that we had arrived with Olimpio at Piediluco and were journeying in their direction . . . for Marco Tullio and Pacifico and I said to Onofrio that we were there with this man Olimpio Calvetti, to bring him to Cantalice inn, where we looked for certain armed men to take him and slay him, according to orders given me to this effect by Monsignore Guerra in Rome. And we told Giovan Onofrio further that Monsignore Guerra would give a hundred scudi to Marco Tullio and three hundred to me as soon as this killing was accomplished."

Obviously, with so much saying and unsaying and contradiction, Bussone was not constructing a line of defence which would be of any advantage to him. He had twice said that nothing had been revealed to Onofrio; now twice he said that Onofrio was informed of everything: the first time "at the gate where stood the slaugh-

tering-pen of Piediluco," and the second time in the Montani house.

"When did Onofrio leave to inform the soldiers in the Kingdom?"

"I do not know truly at what time he left, but I know that I told him to go."

The story was now no longer that Onofrio had run to give warning to the soldiers of the Kingdom, in some place unknown, that they should come to Cantalice inn to give Olimpio a warm welcome with their daggers; Onofrio, said the witness now, had gone to the inn, where the soldiers were already waiting, to tell them to be ready, for "that man whom Monsignore Guerra was sending" was about to arrive!

The Court, far from admiring this young man's imagination and his successive variations on his theme, kept him on the rack for the space of three Ave Marias.

On July 29th also he was again briefly examined, still at the Corte Savella. He admitted that he had fallen into many contradictions, but none the less sought to excuse himself. The real truth was now this: he and Pacifico had merely conducted Olimpio to Cantalice inn, and had there put him in the hands of "those men who were lying in wait" to aid Marco Tullio in his "business."

In this battle between torturing judge and tortuous witness Bussone seems to have carried off the honours.

On August 7th the Duke of Modena's informant wrote to his master: "The man who some days since slew Olimpio now being imprisoned, investigation has been made to find by whose order the slaying was done. The story goes about the Court that the reason Monsignore Guerra has absented himself from Rome is because he gave much aid in this case."

CHAPTER XXV

THE LAST EXAMINATION OF THE CENCI

An *avviso* from Rome to the Court of Urbino, of July 28th, stated: "In the Cenci case it has been said for some hours that Monsignore Guerra, the Cenci's cousin, has fled, and that the Marzio who confessed to the murder of Francesco Cenci is dead in prison; and Olimpio has not been found, and the opinion runs that he is dead likewise."

The news was not very fresh, for though Guerra had fled only eleven days before, Olimpio had been buried more than two months. We think also that the date of Marzio Catalano's death should be placed earlier. For it seems to us evident that if he had lived until July or at least until June, as some believe,[1] he would have been again interrogated and confronted with the other accused and the witnesses, during the forty examinations which followed that of Lucrezia on February 13th, wherein Marzio Catalano appeared for the last time.

Torture, cold, and anguish of mind combined had killed him out of hand. No comfort of any sort, either for soul or body, ever reached his prison from the outside world. Poor wretch! Far away must have seemed to him the bright, free days on his Abruzzian hills, their shining torrents, their bosky woods. Far away the happy tramps beneath the moon, to the rhythm of lute and song, the joy of wife and children at the return of the breadwinner. All had ended in tears and blood through the accursed Cenci—the thrice-accursed Olimpio!

In imagination we see his wretched corpse lying on his filthy pallet in the foulest cell of Tordinona. And for shroud is cast upon him the cloak of the murdered man!

On July 30th, a little more than a month after his pre-

[1] Diomede Rodâni: La storia vera di Beatrice Cenci (Rome, 1899), p. 27

vious examination, Giacomo was brought before Moscato and Molella in Tordinona. When summoned to tell the truth about his father's death, he responded arrogantly: "I have been asked many times how the death of my father took place; and Your Honour must have your fill of asking me, as I have my fill of answering."

He said that he had seen Plautilla when he had gone to La Petrella, but denied ever having spoken to her in Rome. When Plautilla was brought before him to vouch for her words, he continued to deny: "I cannot guess at what is in other people's minds, nor can I look inside them; but I know well that she lies."

Beatrice took the same attitude in an interrogatory on the same day. She did not know any brother of Olimpio: "I have seen priests and friars come to see Paolo when he was ill; but I know not who they were, and I have never known any one as a relative of Olimpio." As for Plautilla, witness had not seen her in Rome until the judge had set her on the stand.[1]

"Did you not speak to her in a church?"

Beatrice replied, with her accustomed tone of contempt: "Here is the church back again!"

"The Court is informed that you spoke to her in the Capuchin church, below Monte Cavallo."

"What is it to me what the Court is informed of?"

Plautilla was re-introduced and confirmed her words; but Beatrice cried: "If a thousand witnesses should come, I say that all would tell lies and perjury."

On August 3rd Lucrezia was interrogated. When Moscato observed to her that she should by now be convinced after all that she had heard testified in court, she exclaimed: "I have no care for being convinced!" Her reply, the judge observed, was "frivolous."

All the results of the trial were then passed in review. All the evidence about the facts was amply and minutely set forth, with regard to the preparation of the crime, its consummation, and the succeeding events in Rome.

[1] This was in an examination of which we have not the record, owing to the lacuna already noted.

But Lucrezia, disregarding everything, without even finding a single excuse which might have a show of plausibility, repeated her accustomed refrain. She knew nothing; the witnesses lied. The archpriest had told her that the thorn was in the wound, and that he "had pulled it forth with his own hands." She could not say whether or no there was blood near Francesco's body in the wilderness, "for she had not been there." As for the hole in the balcony and the impossibility of the body's passing through it, "I know not what to say of it. . . . I refer to what I have said. Were there mattresses and blood-stained wool in Plautilla's house and in that of her Uncle Massimo? Well, "belike they soiled them afterwards."

"As for their saying that I said I had heard Signor Francesco cry: 'Jesu! Jesu! Jesu!', I say that I did not say that. What I said was that I heard a voice crying: 'Jesu!' but I know not if it were the voice of Signor Francesco!"

The Court did not hide its impatience at such imbecilities. It warned Lucrezia to have done with her lies and subterfuges if only *quia ad nobilem mulierem spectat veritatem fateri et juramentum prestitum de veritate dicenda adimplere.*" [1]

But Lucrezia continued her familiar replies: "I know nothing of it; if you would put me to the rack, do what seems best to you. . . . I know nothing of it; if Olimpio slew Signor Francesco, punish him; and if others also did it, punish them." And after telling the court to punish Olimpio, she continued: "I know not what the friar tells; he does it to put the blame on me because Olimpio is dead; this friar has told me he is dead, and I know not what it all means."

She was questioned about rewards given to Catalano, and about the cloak; she rejoined: "I did not recognise it as Signor Francesco's cloak; it may be it was his and maybe not . . . and if Beatrice and Giorgio have recognised it, it is no concern of mine."

[1] Because it behooves a noble lady to confess the truth, and to fulfil the oath made to speak truth.—*Trans.*

As for the declarations of the priests of La Petrella, she "could not control any man's tongue."

"But for what reason should those priests lie, the more so as they are men of religion?"

"And does Your Honour believe that those priests are like the priests of Rome? By their works they are known, for they work with cattle and plough the fields!"

The Court thought it impossible to make any progress in this fashion. But while the mass of conclusive evidence in its hands should have sufficed to conclude the trial and condemn the Cenci, the fact that it could not condemn them without their confessions obliged it to have recourse to the iniquity of torture in their case as in the others. On account of their social rank the court could not by its own decision bind them to the rope and suspend them, as it had done with common folk like Lelio Antonelli, Catalano, Fra' Pietro and Cesare Bussone; it was obliged to obtain some *motu proprio* from the Pope. And in fact that *motu proprio:* "*Quemadmodum paterna clementia,*" came directed to "our beloved son" Ferdinando Taverna, Governor of Rome; and on the morning of August 5th the Governor sent it to Moscato, through the agency of the Most Excellent Tranquillo Ambrosini. The *motu proprio* granted full permission to use torture to obtain the confessions of Giacomo, Bernardo, Beatrice and Lucrezia Cenci, "*in hac alma urbe nostra carceratos,*"[1] to proceed to the sentence and, if the case should require, to the confiscation of property.

Moscato was overjoyed; he knew that this was the sole method of escaping the evident dissatisfaction of the Pope, who was censuring the Court for being unable to bring this simple case to a conclusion! In his desire to make an end of the matter he now displayed the resolution he had hitherto lacked, and the cruelty which never failed him.

On August 7th, in Corte Savella, Rosati was first examined. As he had been in Marzio Colonna's service, he had received from Colonna many marks of confidence and

[1] Imprisoned in this our gracious city.—*Trans.*

important commissions. We know the attitude Colonna had taken against his castellan of La Petrella, and how he had instituted the first inquiries, by Querco, into the death of Francesco Cenci. Olimpio well understood that if once he should lose the good will of his lord he would lose his sole hope of escape. He had therefore begged Rosati to make advances to Colonna, so that his feudal lord would not press the investigation nor give aid to the Law, nor permit the capture of Olimpio, his representative in his fief of La Petrella and in the Cicolano. Olimpio had used both pleas and threats, and had even attempted a sort of blackmail "on the point of honour"; for if in those days, if it was not considered shameful for a nobleman to abuse a peasant woman, it was held highly shameful for a plebeian to have relations with a woman of noble family. It was arranged that such degradations should remain hidden, or that by means of secret vendettas sin and sinners should be hidden from men's sight in one grave.

Among Olimpio's threats was therefore this: that it would be well to reflect whether his capture would not lead to the revelation of his intimacy with Beatrice, and to the great scandal of that nobility which Colonna, in his high social position, was obliged to safeguard. Olimpio further said to Rosati that Beatrice also adjured him to speak in her name to Colonna, "so that it might never be known that Olimpio had had carnal relations with her."

Now Rosati declared in his examination that when he had gone to Zagarolo he had not failed to speak to his master to this purpose; but Colonna had replied "that on the head of honour he would have kept the business secret, but there was more in it than that!"

Rosati had then spoken on this delicate theme with Giacomo and had reported to him his lord's opinion, that Giacomo should treat Olimpio warily, so as not to compromise his sister. To Giacomo, with the hauteur of his caste it was one thing to admit that Olimpio might frequent his house as the assassin of his father but quite another as the lover of his sister. Refraining in Rosati's

presence from any display of anger on such a matter, he had proceeded to his bargain with Colonna for Olimpio's death. Rosati was to carry the victim away from Rome on one pretext or another, and then put him out of the way.

"Giacomo Cenci told me that he desired that Olimpio be removed from here on account of some things which it had been observed the man was doing with Giacomo's sister, Beatrice; and he said that he would be pleased to find a means of removing the man. And I said to Signor Giacomo that I had to go into Lombardy . . . on account of an honourable alliance between princes, with the knowledge of Signor Marzio, and that if Olimpio wished to come, he might well come with me; and all this was in the Piazza de' Santi Apostoli." So said Rosati; as was natural, he did not involve his lord.

There is no need to review the journey to Novellara. We know how he went there and we know, too, that when they were beyond the borders of the Papal State, Olimpio revealed the crime at La Petrella to his companion, describing it in detail and naming all those concerned.

Rosati then told how he had delivered Calvetti to the Countess of Novellara, and of Olimpio's escape and return to Rome later. He finally spoke of the money found in Olimpio's pockets and distributed on the spot, and of the gold ring with the cut diamond, etc. But he said not a word, nor was any question put him, concerning his infamous attempt to poison Olimpio. Rather he pictured himself as "kindly disposed," and the good friend of his companion. Much less was any mention made of the queer business of the 13,000 scudi arranged by his mediation between Giacomo and Colonna!

On the same day, August 7th, Moscato resumed the interrogatories of the Cenci at Corte Savella. He first summoned Giacomo, who had been transferred there for the greater convenience of the trial. Giacomo naturally began by maintaining all he had said and by denying that he had ever discussed getting rid of Olimpio with Rosati

or any other. He had spoken with Rosati only about the thirteen thousand scudi which his father owed to Signor Marzio Colonna!

Rosati was introduced; he asked, alluding to Olimpio's relations with Beatrice: "Signor Giacomo, did you not seek me out that I should strive to remove Olimpio out of Rome for the honour of the house?"

Giacomo denied this; when Rosati was removed he declared that he did not even know if Olimpio were alive or dead. Then Moscato asked him what he had said to Cesare Bussone in the Castello.

"How would Your Honour have it that I could speak to him when I was in solitary confinement? I did not speak to him, neither from the window, nor from any other point."

Then he too had recourse to a set of pitiful lies. Not only did he say that he had never had "too great an intelligence" with Monsignore Guerra, but he did not even know what was the kinship between them. If any one had "close dealings" with the Monsignore, it was Bernardo.

He was now called upon to tell the truth about the crime; but since he insisted that he had nothing to tell, Moscato, putting his words into effect, had him taken to the torture-chamber, stripped, bound, and tied to the rope. The judge then admonished him to confess. Said the other: "I cannot say aught but what I have said."

He was hoisted.

"Jesu, Jesu, Jesu! Madonna of the Mountains, aid me! Madonna, Madonna of the Mountains, aid me! Jesu, Jesu, I die here; aid me! Let me down, Signore; Signore, let me down; Signore, let me down; Signore, let me down; Signore, let me down; Signore, let me down, let me down!" After a *credo* he was lowered "*leviter*" and settled on a wooden chair, but naked and with his arms still bound behind him.

He began his confession. Sad to relate, it was by casting the blame on his brothers and sister that he sought to palliate his own guilt. Let us not forget that this is the same Giacomo who angered Beatrice, and even Lucrezia,

by daring to ask of them information about his own father's death, as if he himself had had no share in it!

Olimpio, he said, was the friend of Paolo and Bernardo; it was they who had showered him with kindnesses and kept him for meals when he was in Rome. Olimpio was wont to lament that Signor Francesco had driven him out of the castle and had "also attempted to rob his wife of her honour!" It did not indeed seem that this action was much in accord with the first, for Plautilla was expelled with Olimpio. The Court urged Giacomo to continue. Olimpio had said that "he wished to brush the flies from his nose and he wished vengeance on our father, and I told him to do whatever he willed." Paolo and Bernardo warned Giacomo that Olimpio was the sort of man to commit any excess; "he was a man of the devil," who had already killed a constable, and had prepared and aided their flight from La Petrella.

"Beatrice took it ill that my father held her in constraint, and it is Beatrice who has been the cause of my father's death and of all this business, and of the ruin of my house. I have this from Beatrice, she herself told me of it. And my stepmother, Lucrezia, and my brothers, Bernardo and Paolo, have told me that it was Beatrice who never ceased railing at Olimpio until she got my father, Signor Francesco, killed; and Beatrice told me that she had got our father, Signor Francesco, killed by the said Olimpio and a donkey-driver, though sometimes she said . . . a cattleherd. And my sister, Beatrice, and my brothers told me this here in Rome, because I fain would send Olimpio out of the house; I did not wish to have him in the house, and I shouted and screamed because I could not prevent Beatrice from talking all day in secret to Olimpio in the house, in Rome; and Beatrice used to say to me: 'You must heap kindness on this Olimpio, else you will be my ruin!'"

Thus the contemptible Giacomo continued to stake his sister's head in the game. In her case there was no lack of extenuating circumstances, while he had never had any other purpose than to possess himself of the paternal

wealth. If, from all we have previously told, he already stands out as the most repellent figure of a repellent family, his conduct on that dreadful 7th of August sets him below the very assassins. Catalano's wretchedness stirs our pity; certain of Olimpio's deeds reveal a sort of rough feeling; but this Giacomo is a creature utterly base!

After thus accusing his sister, he said that at his dialogue with Olimpio "Bernardo and Paolo were present; they concurred in this arrangement." Bernardo receives his share of obloquy: even the memory of dead Paolo does not escape!

From this point in his testimony Giacomo cast aside all restraint. Not he, but Beatrice, had promised Olimpio "to dower Vittoria with two thousand scudi and keep her in the palace." He had concurred with this arrangement, he added, because, for one reason, she "was playing the devil and wished to get our father killed."

He then told of his journey to La Petrella with Bernardo, Cesare Cenci, and Orazio Pomella; he told what he had learned of the crime, and spoke of the correspondence he had had from his cell with Monsignore Guerra. He then thrust Beatrice deeper into the mire. Words which from Rosati and others were merely the spiteful gossip of outsiders were an infamy on a brother's lips.

"Olimpio came to Rome to my house, where he lived in intimacy with my sister. . . . It is true that I asked Camillo Rosati in his kindness to take Olimpio far away, and I did this truly that nothing should be discovered about the honour of my sister, touching this Olimpio."

Giacomo said all these words livid with terror lest the rope which still bound his arms behind his back should be again pulled taut and raise his body aloft.

On the following day (August 8th), he was called upon to confirm what he had said in his previous examination. It is appalling to perceive that nothing, during his night's reflection, had persuaded him to withdraw the accusation of complicity he had launched at Bernardo. He was not to withdraw this accusation till on the road to the scaf-

Supposed Portrait of Lucrezia Cenci
Gallery Barberini, Rome

fold, too late to save the boy from prison, the galleys, and exile.

Bernardo was therefore haled before the Court, from Tordinona. Naturally, even though he had no active part in the preparation of the crime, he knew all about it. Yet he continued to deny everything; it is rather fine to see him striving to save that very brother who twenty-four hours before had so vilely denounced him. Giacomo, he said, could not have plotted the father's death with Olimpio: he, Bernardo, was always present at their dialogues, and would have overheard them.

From this point the examinations proceeded with all speed.

On August 9th, at Corte Savella, Lucrezia was interrogated. She continued to deny everything that was said to her; but admitted that the ring with the cut diamond, taken by Rosati from Olimpio and from Rosati by the Court, had belonged to Signor Francesco. His also was the small casket "like a matin-book of leather stamped with golden lilies," which he had had in the palazzo at Sant' Eustachio. As for the ring, she had seen it on Beatrice's hand after her husband's death.

As though it seemed to her that she had already said too much, she fell back on her favourite method of defence, of knowing nothing; nor was she moved an inch therefrom by the reading of Rosati's testimony, in which he spoke of the crime, nor by Fra' Pietro's evidence.

"What would you say if all that actually occurred were to be described to your face by Giacomo?"

"If Giacomo tells it that is no affair of mine."

Giacomo was introduced.

Far from appearing humiliated at having confessed everything under physical stress, and at having undone Bernardo and the two women, he was insolent.

"A fine game I played on myself when I let myself be dragged in by you women! I should have had Olimpio clapped in gaol when he came here to Rome, and the truth would have been discovered, and it would have been seen how much guilt was mine; but Signor Marzio [Colonna]

persuaded me not to have Olimpio imprisoned for fear matters touching honour might come to light."

And since Lucrezia persisted in denying that she had taken part in the crime, Giacomo turned to a Madonna hanging on the wall and exclaimed: "O blessed, glorious Mary, make this woman tell the truth! Thou knowest that I have not had the slightest guilt, and that these women have wished to thrust me in the midst of it." Then, kneeling and turning to Lucrezia: "Signora Lucrezia, for the love of God, tell the truth, that you know everything—that you have told it to me—and that Beatrice has told it me."

Said the stepmother: "I know nothing. If you and your sister have done the deed, put no blame on me."

Bernardo, taken in his turn from Tordinona to Corte Savella, was put on the stand against Giacomo. When he heard his own complicity declared by his brother, his courage oozed from him. He admitted that he had been present at the devising of the plot in Rome by Giacomo and Olimpio; the latter had declared that he would not kill Francesco Cenci without their consent.

In the afternoon Giacomo was again brought to face Lucrezia, who persisted in her denials.

Said he: "Know you not that you have told me" often how "Signor Francesco was murdered?"

She insisted that she knew no other version than that of the fall from the balcony.

Moscato sent Giacomo to the rack. Being bound, he reaffirmed his words. Being racked, he cried: "You devil-ridden woman who have the brazenness to deny; and it is true, true, true!"

"It is not true! It is not true!"

"It is true, it is true!" persisted Giacomo. He was soon lowered; his arms were resettled, he was clothed and sent back to his cell.

But now the hour of torture had come for Lucrezia as well. Up to this moment the women had not been touched; but Moscato declared that in view of the pertinacity of the accused and the gravity of the crime, "the victim

being a husband," [1] it was his duty to subject her also to torture. She was not stripped; she was bound to the rope dressed as she was.

"Confess and escape the racking!"

"Signore, I have told the truth!"

She was hoisted and at first remained mute; but then began to shriek: "Jesu, Jesu, Jesu! Let me down, let me down, for the passion of Christ!" She promised to tell the truth.

It had been Beatrice's desire that Signor Francesco be murdered, as she could no longer support his evil treatment and desired vengeance for her whipping with the bull-pizzle. It was Beatrice who had made an alliance with Olimpio, in secret, to perform the deed; she had brought him, by night, even to her own room. It was Beatrice who had conceived the plan of arranging an assault by the bandits of Marcetelli; she had treated of this purpose with Catalano. It was Beatrice who had prepared and desired her father's death! "I said to her: 'Daughter, this is a great sin and you will bring ruin on yourself and all of us.' . . . And she said in her turn: 'I wish to have him dead at any cost.'"

And if Olimpio had gone to Rome, it was Beatrice's will that sent him. He had obeyed, and Giacomo "had been content and had told him . . . to do whatever Beatrice desired."

When, at dawn on September 8th, they had appeared "at the door of the two rooms opposite the door of the inner chamber where Cenci slept," she had come forth, according to the plan, and had said: "Have respect for the Madonna, for this is her day." She had thus constrained the ruffians to withdraw. After this also she had sought to dissuade them from the crime, but no one could stand against Beatrice's will, therefore Francesco was murdered. "I went forth, for I was terrified; I went to Beatrice's room and did not see what was done, but I heard the blows which Olimpio and Marzio gave to Signor Francesco." She continued her description of the deed in all

[1] "Quod sumus in uxoricidio."

its horror, and of the few anguished days they spent subsequently at La Petrella. And it is Beatrice—always Beatrice whom she accuses! When she and Plautilla had been weeping, Beatrice had not scrupled to assail them and call them "blockheads." It was Beatrice who had prepared the drugged wine for her father. It was Beatrice still who had exhorted her to keep silence, come what might; she had even said many times: "Have you not the spirit to bear the rack a little? I am willing to bear it." In contact with Beatrice's firm will the stepmother had been but a weakling; now that she stood apart from her she poured out all her hoarded spite upon her stepdaughter.

Her attitude was no different in her examination on the 10th. "When Olimpio and Marzio entered to kill Signor Francesco . . . Beatrice was with them." She dwelt much on her halting the murder of her husband on the feast of the Madonna, as if that should absolve her from blame now! After all, who was she to resist the decision of all that band of determined persons. She had not given her consent, had not arranged nor ordered any crime, "nor made any promise to any one . . . and if I consented to it" it was because "I could not do otherwise, for I was alone there and knew not what to do, and if I had not consented they would have murdered me too, for they told me that if I should say a word it would be my ruin."

If she had kept silence till now, it was due to pressure from Giacomo and Beatrice, and "so as not to bring shame on the young girl Beatrice and on all the house." The whole tale of the fall from the balcony also was Beatrice's invention, and it was Beatrice who had forced the deponent to tell the tale, to repeat it and sustain it. "It was Beatrice who did all these things, and also this matter of getting her father killed, because she would not remain there longer, and because she wished to be wed; and she held her father in great hatred, since he had beaten her with a bull-pizzle so that the mark of it remained on her finger."

Bernardo's brief examination on the same day, immediately after that of Lucrezia, opened, in fact, with the judge's question as to whether he knew that Beatrice had been beaten by her father. The young Cenci confirmed the fact; he then continued to tell how and of whom he had learned of the commission of the crime. He concluded in an anguished voice: "The devil sent this Olimpio to us in Rome!"

Finally, when Bernardo had been heard, Giacomo and Lucrezia examined and tortured, and Rosati's intimate knowledge put on record, the terrible heroine of the trial was introduced. It was the afternoon of the same day, and still in Corte Savella. She had shortly before written to Prospero Farinaccio, thanking him for having decided to defend her, "a poor desperate girl . . . and for accepting the proposals of S. O. T. [Signor Ottavio Tignosino]." She wrote: "I no longer know what to do in order not to fall from one evil into another, and even though I slew myself, I would fall under the curse of the Holy Father." [1]

She stood forth, proud, disdainful.

"The Court knows that you procured your father's death."

"Signore, it is not true; and it will never be found true."

"Were you beaten by your father?"

"No, sir, my father never struck me in Petrella castle."

[1] Dalbono, p. 437. Some have held this letter to be apocryphal. We may note that Beatrice's allusion to suicide, especially strange considering the period, corresponds perfectly with an undoubted word of hers, recorded in the original trial of Marzio Catalano and unknown to Dalbono and others: "If she found no remedy she would fain kill herself." Further, let us remember that Vittoria Accoramboni had in those very days twice attempted suicide, and that a woman killed herself in 1585 by throwing herself with her baby from a window (Dom. Gnoli: Vittoria Accoramboni, pp. 129, 272, 299); and that Virginia Maria di Leyva ("The Lady of Monza") attempted suicide. See Achille Locatelli-Milesi, "The Truth About the 'Lady of Monza'" (Milan, 1924), pp. 36 and 163. Besides, why should Dalbono have falsified a letter of no importance to the thesis he was supporting?

"How can you deny that the floggings and the prison-life in the fortress made you conceive a great hatred against your father, to the point of wishing him dead?"

"I tell you that I have never suffered blows from my father's hand; nor have I ever thought of having him slain."

Her hands were inspected. It was found that the nail on the middle finger of the left hand was deformed by a scar.

She was warned that Catalano had confessed, stating that she had sent for him. Beatrice's answer: "He does not tell the truth," proves that the Court had concealed Marzio's death from the accused to keep them in continual suspense.

"Lucrezia also has confessed."

"I know not what Signora Lucrezia may say."

"Signora Lucrezia said that you gave the opium to your father."

"I know not what thing opium may be, and I have given none of it, and I know not what Your Honour means. . . . I marvel at this word; if Signora Lucrezia says such a thing, she says it because she wishes me ill, and is playing the stepmother."

"Did you seek out bandits to seize and kill your father at Villa Marzia?" [1]

"I know not what you are saying; I know of no bandits, nor of any Villa Marzia, nor anything."

Moscato began to speak to her of the crime and described it to her. She denied every detail and every attempt to bring it home to her.

"Did not Signor Francesco possess pearls, jewels, precious stones, golden rings?"

Beatrice knew only that he had possessed the two rings already mentioned.

"What has become of them?"

"I received the small one, with the cut diamond."

It was displayed to her; she recognised it. "But it was

[1] The judge, not knowing the locality and following an error of Lucrezia, confused Villa Marzia and Marcetelli.

perfect, not broken as it is now." She recognised also the leather casket with the golden lilies.

"Can you imagine how the Court obtained the ring?"

"You may well have bought it; I know not whence it may have come."

"You made a gift of it."

"I have not parted with this ring to any person, either as a gift or otherwise."

"The Court knows that you gave it to Olimpio."

"I tell you that I know not what you are saying."

She was asked if she knew Camillo Rosati.

"I know no man named Camillo Rosati, and I know no one of Signor Marzio Colonna's household."

Moscato did not scruple to order the reading of Rosati's testimony, in the course of which he stated bluntly that Olimpio had revealed to him that he had "had to do with her carnally."

Beatrice listened, trembling, silent, her face livid; she rose in fury: "I do not know this man and I know not what sort of man he may be; and I say that he is a great traitor and a great assassin. . . . He has been made to say what he says by folk who he knows well are our ill-wishers, for if what he says were true, he would have brought Olimpio here and made him say it to me to my face; but as it was not the truth, he could not make him come . . . and this man is a great scoundrel."

She then said that the ring was perhaps given to Rosati by her father, who had had so many business relations and so much intimacy with the house of Colonna.

At this point rage again seized her.

"Why did this Camillo Rosati wait to come here . . . until Olimpio was dead? And why did he not deliver Olimpio to justice when he had him in his hands? But this fellow and his masters, who had taken Olimpio out on the roads to assassinate him as was their wont, did not wish him to come here and speak, for fear their own villainies should be discovered. . . . And write down further that this Camillo, knave and assassin that he is, waited seven months, until copies of the record had passed

out of the hands of those who wrote them, in order better to know the testimony of Marzio Catalano; and out of that testimony he has got all he says, and thence it may be known how great a scoundrel he is!"

She continued, raging ever the more: "He has come to tell this lie and this falsity because he knows that Olimpio can no more come forward; and he is a hell-hound, and lies in his throat a thousand times!"

The notary writes that she said these words almost stammering through the fury that choked her.

Then, "the better to convict her of mendacity and persuade her to tell the truth," Fra' Pietro's examination of June 23d was read to her. In this it was recorded that she had given the ring to Olimpio and had had a velvet costume made for him. The depositions of the three priests of La Petrella were also read to her.

"They have taken counsel on the road hither, and they are a drove of liars, priests though they are; and, saving their consecration, they are a crew of scoundrels and thieves, and they have never spoken thus to me."

It was pointed out to her that all the witnesses had by this time testified or confessed what she was denying. In the depositions of Rosati and Fra' Pietro, the law possessed even the "extra-judicial" confession of Olimpio. Did she know that her brother, Giacomo, had also confessed?

"Signore, I have told you the truth; I can say no other. And if my brother Giacomo is brought before my face, I shall reply to him."

When it was said to her that the painful spectacle of this confrontation would not be seemly, she promptly answered:

"It is seemly for the sake of truth."

Moscato then ordered that Giacomo should be led in. After a painful silence he entered and found himself in his sister's presence. They regarded each other mutely; then he said in a low voice: "Would it were not the truth, as it is, all that I have said in my examinations, both my

testimony against myself and that against the others I have named in my statements!"

The notary read the confession Giacomo had made after his torture, and Giacomo confirmed it, including his depositions "against Beatrice." He made the statement to her face.

"It is not true," she cried; "I never sent Olimpio to him, and I know not what is being said, and I think he is out of his mind and has gone mad."

But Giacomo replied that he had told the truth, "and were it not true, I would not say it."

He was taken back to prison, and Lucrezia brought in. After the customary formality of the oath, she confirmed all she had already deposed, while Beatrice repeated: "Nothing is true that she says, and she bears me ill-will; she is my stepmother and would fain see me dead."

"Would it were not the truth!" murmured Lucrezia. "I have kept this business hid for a time in all my examinations, and to save us and our house, and to save myself also I have refused to confess; but since I have had the torture, I could not say other than what I have said."

To make her validate her confession, she was sent again *ad locum torturae*. She was not stripped, but merely bound; and reaffirmed her words. She was hoisted; "Uh! Uh! It is true, true, true, what I have said, and for truth I confirm and ratify it. Alas, alas, alas! It is true, it is true!"

Said Beatrice: "I say that she lies in her throat, and it is not true."

After an Ave Maria, Lucrezia was lowered, unbound, her arms resettled; she was remanded.

Giacomo was led in for the same test. In the presence of his sister, he was stripped, bound, hoisted, tortured. But to the assertions he stammered forth in the midst of cries and groans of pain, Beatrice opposed flat denials. Bernardo likewise, her young brother, was attached to the rope. Moscato wished Beatrice to see all her kin under

torture and to hear their cries and their accusations. Then he ordered that she too be bound and racked.

"Alas! Alas! O Madonna santissima, aid me! . . . Let me down! I will tell the truth."

Her ordeal had lasted only the space of an Ave Maria. It had been briefer than the others, because she had quickly expressed her willingness to "tell the truth," not, we think, from lack of strength and resolution, but because she understood at last that all resistance was useless. The confessions of the others and the mass of evidence constituted too overwhelming a proof.

Unlike the others, who had imputed the chief guilt to her as the one who had conceived and urged on the crime, she attempted to impose the belief that the guilt was Olimpio's. On him Justice could no longer wreak its vengeance. "Some months before the death of our father Olimpio began to speak to me and to Signora Lucrezia and persuade us that it would be well to bring about my father's death, for otherwise we would remain shut forever in that fortress, and he would let us die there. And so he began to get us in the way of that thought, and I answered him: 'How can this be done? We shall all be hung on the gallows if this crime be committed.' And Olimpio said: 'Fear not, for I shall slay him, and then we shall all three go away and flee.' He meant Lucrezia and me; and because Lucrezia and I were weary of being locked up and restrained in that fortress, and knew not when we were to be released, and because I had been struck down by our father with that rod, as Lucrezia has said, and Lucrezia had been struck with a riding-spur . . . and she too hated him . . . so finally both of us leaned toward consenting to what Olimpio said, that our father should be slain by Olimpio. And I said to him: 'Alas, if our father be slain here in this castle, Signor Marzio [Colonna] will hound us down and bring us all to a bad end!' And Olimpio replied: 'Fear nothing. Signor Marzio has been here at the Capuchin house of La Petrella; I have spoken to him and I know his mind. . . .' And he said further that Signor Marzio had wanted the

hamlet 'outside the fortress,'[1] and that Signor Francesco had refused to give it to him. And so we remained agreed that it should be done. And this took place at a window of the hall, when our father was not at home, but had gone to the Capuchin monastery, for there at the Capuchin house was Signor Marzio. And this accord was made between us, and I said to Olimpio that I wished naught to be done without the consent of my brothers, that is, of Giacomo, Bernardo, and Paolo; and so Olimpio agreed that he would go to speak to them."

He had gone to Rome and had returned to La Petrella with the red root given him by Giacomo and with the opium. Beatrice told how she had melted the opium and put it in the wine; she described the "giving credit" required by her father, the coming of Olimpio and Catalano to the castle, the delays in the commission of the crime, and Plautilla's reconnoitring journey to the Castle Vineyard. Then in minute detail she related the murder and their terror-stricken efforts to hide the appalling traces of the deed. Then she paused, and after a painful silence resumed: "Signora Lucrezia, she too counselled me and persuaded me to get my father slain by Olimpio, after Olimpio had had those words with us about wishing to kill our father . . . and she was always saying: 'This father of yours will hold us here forever, and he will abuse you and rob you of your honour and do you a thousand ills.'"

"What did you promise to Olimpio and Catalano?"

Beatrice admitted that she had told Olimpio to give Marzio "a purse of scudi" and her father's cloak; but, with a reserve that is easy to understand, she denied having given Olimpio the ring. "He himself took that ring." She added that it was Giacomo who had promised him to dower Vittoria and arrange her marriage.

Beatrice told all this tale with her arms dislocated and bound. Only at the end were they resettled in place. She then signed: "I, Beatrice Cenci, have deposed as is written above."

[1] Of Torrenova?

On the following day, August 11th, she was again summoned to confirm and complete what she had confessed.

"Signore, I tell you now that I have told the truth, and as the Madonna may aid me I have told the truth and all that I have said is true."

Vittoria's dowry was brought into question.

"Whether I promised Olimpio this dowry or whether it was my brothers, is of no matter to me; and it may have been another way, that Olimpio told Giacomo, Bernardo, and Paolo that I had promised it, so that they should confirm it. Olimpio told me when he returned to La Petrella from Rome that Giacomo and my brothers had promised to get Vittoria wed and to give her two thousand scudi, and I said to him: 'Since they are content thereat, so am I content, and I confirm it to you.' "

She was still angered by the recollection of the simulated attitude of knowing little or nothing of the crime which Giacomo had assumed with herself and Lucrezia. "He said: 'If you go to prison, I know not what to do about it; I was not here.' And he sought to clear himself, and since we were interrupted by people who were coming into the house, I did not then make answer as was fitting to that speech of his, but I conceived great anger at it." Again: "Another time—it was the day Marzio went to prison—Giacomo said to me: 'I have heard that a Marzio Catalano has gone to prison; heed well that you do not confess. Even though you be taken prisoner and bear the rack a little, what is that to you? They can do nothing to me, for I was not there.' "

At this point the Court ordered that Beatrice be sent back to the tower; but as she was preparing to leave she said: "Signore, write this down: that Signora Lucrezia said to me many times, I now recall, before our father's death: 'When he took me to wife, he promised me to give a thousand scudi each to my three daughters and to make them nuns, and when my daughters were coming of age he promised to keep them in a convent and pay their costs; and now I have learned that he is at law with my

daughters, for he will not pay their expenses at the convent, and my daughters have gone forth, and God knows how they will speed; but I intend to see the end of this some day.' And therefore she often exhorted me to hasten on the death of my father."

As Lucrezia's last shaft was aimed at her stepdaughter, so was Beatrice's last directed at the stepmother.

The news that emanated from Corte Savella concerning the torture and the confessions of the Cenci was scanty and vague. But that little sufficed to set all Rome buzzing, the more so since it grew into strangely deformed shapes as it passed from lip to lip. Meanwhile public interest centred daily the more on Beatrice, abandoning the others to their fate. She gradually became the heroine of the trial; according to common rumour, she was the only one who had not confessed under the most atrocious tortures, for which the Court was blamed; nor did the common allusions spare even the Pontiff himself.

It is at this time that the *avvisi* begin to concern themselves more and more with the trial. "This name, *avvisi*," wrote Alessandro De Hübner, "designated the collections of news distributed twice a week in Rome and outside the city in manuscript sheets. Those who assembled the information were called *menanti* or 'directors,' 'because they direct public opinion,' said the ambassador Michele Suriano, 'but they direct it without discretion or responsibility.' The Cardinal de' Medici lamented the abundance of such news-sheets, made in order to lead public opinion astray; and Sixtus V more than once took vigorous action against their writers and editors. Such *avvisi*, which are not to be confused with the stray broadsheets bearing the same name, were enclosed by the secretaries of the Venetian ambassadors in their official despatches. They are of great importance because they contributed to the formation of public opinion; and until very recent times, before the State Archives were opened

to Science, they have been among the principal sources for historians." [1]

Already, before the reign of Sixtus V, Pius V had attempted to check the diffusion of the *avvisi*, in his edicts of 1571 and 1572. He admonished even the cardinals to restrain their secretaries, for these were commonly the "directors" of the sheets.[2] Yet not all of them were attached to the cardinals; some, occasionally physicians, worked on their own account, while others still were connected with the embassies or worked under their control, as in the case of the embassy of Urbino. Yet all of them would loiter during the busy hours of the day in Parione, amidst the swarm of curious and gossiping idlers.

Much as these *avvisi* were desired, sought after, and prized by those who received them, they were promptly branded as unworthy of credit—but almost always by those to whose interest it was that they should not be believed. This discredit persisted for long and, sustained by historical criticism, has come down to our own day. It was realised later that in substance these news-sheets did not differ from the diaries and chronicles of the time, which in their turn did not so much report definite official intelligence as assemble the current rumours about people and events. It was recognised besides that even when they did not reproduce the facts with absolute exactness, they yet gave the news as it was divulged and helped to form a public opinion whence consequences and facts often genuine and of great importance proceeded.

Certainly, in the case of the Cenci, that opinion, with all its errors, had its influence on the decisions of the highest authority of all, and though these decisions came too late to aid those who had been tried and punished, they yet aided the survivors. What proves most clearly that nothing stirred the Roman populace at the time so deeply as the Cenci trial is the passionate interest in it

[1] *Sisto V*, (Rome, 1887), Vol. I, p. 211, n. 1.

[2] Ant. Bertolotti: Giornalisti, astrologi e negromanti in Roma nel secolo XVII, in the Rivista Europea, of Florence, Feb. 1, 1878, p. 466.

taken by the "directors" themselves. It has been noted with complete justice that while, in the *avvisi*, "condemnations and punishments are always recorded, dispassionately and, without any display of a pity which was not felt and which was not in keeping with the times," the Roman gazetteer assumed a very different tone "when he came to tell of the unhappy end of the Cenci." [1]

On August 7th an *avviso* to the Court of Modena stated: "It is much feared that the case of these Cenci nobles may be on its way to a tragic end." And another of August 11th to the Court of Urbino: "The Cenci case begins truly to go ill. . . . The *Veglia* was applied to the stepmother," and then to the girl, "and they were to treat her with it even till the twelfth hour this morning." We know that the *veglia* was not applied to any of them. It was held, the writer added, that Beatrice had not confessed. "But in any case the Pope holds them convicted of guilt, and since His Holiness believes it, this is sufficient to seal their doom." Then he concluded, with reference to the wealth acquired by the grandfather, Cristoforo Cenci: "In fine, these possessions came from one who was a cleric of the Camera, and therefore they must needs return to the Camera; and who does not know that they are among the best country properties there are outside Rome?"

Thus the imputation that the purpose of the trial of the Cenci was to confiscate their wealth grew stronger. We say "grew stronger" because, as we have said, it was present from the very beginning of the trial.

But we are to speak of this later. For the present, we turn to the news sent from Rome after the confessions of the Cenci; we may add that the same informant of the Court of Urbino wrote on August 14th: "The Cenci's business is in a desperate pass, it being said that they have been given the *veglia* and have confessed all, so that soon a harsh penalty will be imposed, as both the men and the

[1] Salvatore Bongi: Le prime gazzette in Italia, in the Nuova Antologia, Vol. XI, (Florence, 1869), pp. 311-346.

women have ratified that they procured the murder of Francesco Cenci." And Vialardo wrote to the Grand Duke: "Giacomo confessed at the first hoist of the rope, and then the stepmother. Bernardo, the beardless boy, said that they had told him the story, but he had known nothing of the business. The high-spirited girl reviled Giacomo a thousand times, and supported the *Veglia* nine hours; she has not confessed." Five minutes' racking had been transmuted into nine hours of the *veglia!* Vialardo continued: "But withal she is counted a dead woman according to the justice of to-day, which will yet provoke God to deal with us in like manner."

Nor was Messer Baldassarre Paolucci, agent of Modena in Rome, less filled with pity, especially for Beatrice. He wrote on the same day, August 14th, to the Cardinal d'Este: "The Cenci case is finished, of which, it may be, Your Most Illustrious Highness has learned from the gazettes. Those poor ladies, mother and daughter, who have been steadfast under many torments up to this, have at last confessed. And within the next week it is expected that they will be seen on the Bridge to receive the merited chastisement. It is a case which moves all Rome to compassion with respect to the girl, who is not yet eighteen years, of more than common beauty, of gracious manners, and rich with more than 40,000 scudi of dowry. She has shown so great heart in these ordeals of hers that she has left all astounded; but, finally, the accomplices being set before her face, and being unable longer to resist the great tortures, she said that God could no longer suffer her iniquities, and so she wished to die with the others. And by the crime and parricide she had committed, she confessed that, through her will to kill her father she had compassed her own death and (what afflicted her more) she had thereby lost her virginity, reft from her by that one who did the deed; a thing not known heretofore."

Giacomo was examined a last time, on the same day, August 14th, in order that he should tell with whom he

had corresponded, by means of the messengers and notes, when he was in the Castello.

"With the Abbot Caetano," he confessed, "to see if he would straightway get Beatrice espoused"; and with Monsignore Guerra, who was constantly sending him encouraging assurances. Their carrier was the cook of Amerigo Capponi, the vice-castellan.

On missing Cesare Bussone, Giacomo had inquired about him and had learned that he had left Rome. But Cesare, on his return, had found a means of speaking to him and telling him "that he had got Olimpio killed," and even "that he himself had killed Olimpio." Giacomo said that he had laughed at the words, thinking them a bold jest; but he had later learned from Giuseppe, bearing a message from Guerra, that Olimpio was indeed dead.

He added that he had not furnished Calvetti with either opium or red root, but that Olimpio had shown these things to him, saying that he had obtained them "of a chemist who served the Signor Cardinal Marcantonio Colonna."

From this moment Giacomo was respited; he was given the term of three days to prepare his own defence.

The last examination of Lucrezia took place two days later, on the 16th; it was again in Corte Savella and again in the presence of Molella.

She spoke once more of her own daughters by her first husband, Felice Velli, of the dispute with Signor Francesco on account of her son, Curzio Velli, and of the blow he had dealt her in the face with a spur.

She persisted that she had never made any complaint of Signor Francesco. She again saddled the guilt on Olimpio and Beatrice. She had seen Beatrice dissolving the opium in a little cup. Let the Court, finally, bear in mind that she had averted the crime on the day of the Assumption of the Virgin, September 8th! The Court listened coldly, then gave Lucrezia also a respite, with three days to prepare her own defence, *sine tamen prejudicio ulterioris processus*.[1] Bernardo and Beatrice were

1 Without prejudice however to any later trial.

also respited at the same time, with the same conditions, and Moscato ordered that the defendants be furnished with copies and summaries of the trial records. Giacomo and Bernardo were returned to Tordinona; the two women remained at Corte Savella.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CHARGE OF INCEST

From this moment the Cenci case was no longer a subject which interested merely the citizens of Rome; the feverish excitement it aroused in their breasts stirred the curiosity of the Courts of Italy and of many people at a distance. In Rome it was the sole subject of talk; already predictions as to the outcome were rife. True news mingled momentarily with false, and fantastic tales were believed. The atrocity of the tortures was censured, the Cenci were pitied, Beatrice's heroism exalted, the conduct of the Court and of Clement VIII became matter for discussion!

It was even related that one of the advocates for the accused having asked and obtained an audience from the Pope to solicit "the copy of the trial record" before Moscato had granted the privilege of defence to the Cenci, "had brought away a somewhat ungracious answer." We glean this information from three *avvisi;* two of August 7th, and one of the 11th, which affirms: "His Holiness last week denied their advocate copies and the right of defence with the words: 'Did they give their father the right of defence when they murdered him?' "

We do not know if these indications may refer to the unwary proceeding before Clement VIII undertaken by the advocate Giorgio Diedi, in the interests of the Cenci. Certainly a turbulent scene took place, and the Pope in one of his fits of rage, not only drove Diedi from his presence with insults, but even had him imprisoned.[1] We possess Diedi's supplication to Clement VIII, begging for pardon and restoration to liberty and to the good graces of the Pope!

[1] "Doctor Dedio protested so much in defence of the girl that Clement upbraided him and drove him forth."—From a letter of Vialardo to the Grand Duke, on Sept. 24, 1599.

"Most Blessed Father:

"Giorgio Diedi, Advocate, after having spoken with Your Holiness with regard to the case of the Cenci, and having been incarcerated by order of Monsignore the Governor, believes therefore that he has offended with little prudence the Most Holy ears of Your Beatitude. Therefore humbly prostrate on the earth, with tears in his eyes, and repenting with all his heart, he asks pardon of Your Holiness and begs that the memory of his words be not kept fresh, but he pleads to the benignity and pity of Your Beatitude that mercy be accorded him, as he will pray Blessed God always for your long life and happy estate."

The plea was transmitted to the Governor with the endorsement: "If there is naught else, let him be released."

All this, however, foreshadowed worse to come, even that the capital penalty would be inflicted. "Certain nuns of Rome," says an *avviso*, "wish to supplicate the Pope that he be content that the women be not executed in public, nor by any extraordinary death." [1]

Another *avviso* of August 18th has it that only "their advocate Farinaccio boasts that at least he will save the women and the last and youngest son." But his hope was unfounded enough, "for they say that His Holiness wishes Giacomo surely to die, that first he be led through the streets of Rome and then slain; and that the heads of the others be severed, notwithstanding that many have done good offices for the girl, in particular the Cardinal di Santa Severina, begging that she might at least be immured in a convent; but His Beatitude will not hearken to a word of it. But of this much will be said in twenty days' time. It is indeed asserted that the property, which amounts to some 500,000 scudi, cannot be confiscated owing to entails; but the ill hap is that the matter

[1] In 1568 also "the Overseers and other principal men of the Roman people" prayed the Pope, Pius V, "not to execute in public a noble and prominent lady," but to "do this justice in prison." However the Pope "had justice wreaked on her upon the Bridge." See Mutinelli: Storia arcana, I, pp. 78-79.

Prospero Farinaccio
Painted by Cav. d'Arpino

is one of *Paricidis*, in which case some will have it that any entail is quashed however strict it be."

This contention was based on the assumption that sons killed their fathers or mothers only to obtain possession of their property, and that it was the duty of the Law to prove to evil-doers in advance that their criminal purpose would be fruitless. Nevertheless since the entails were not designed to protect the patrimony of the sons alone, but rather of the descendants for all time, it was hardly equity to extend the guilt and the punishment of their fathers and ancestors to these as well. And in the case of the Cenci, if eagerness to lay hands on the paternal wealth had urged Giacomo to crime, it had certainly played no great part in Lucrezia's and Beatrice's motives.

On the same day Paoluccio wrote to Cardinal d'Este: "It is sought on several sides to free that young woman of the Cenci, and if any road can be found to save her life, she will not die. And this is the reason the death of the others is deferred from day to day, for this morning it was expected that all would be seen on the Bridge." And an *avviso* of the 21st to Urbino states: "It is being said that in the end the stepmother and Giacomo will die, and that the girl and the boy will assuredly go free; and it is further said that the girl will certainly be married to the vice-castellan. But these words are founded on what the advocates promise, and if advocates are given money enough they will say all manner of things; they are founded also on what the Cardinal Aldobrandino is said to be doing to aid the Cencis, and they say that the matter is aided by the love of the vice-castellan and also by the wife of Signor Giovan Francesco [Aldobrandino]. But the hopes are based on this most of all, that when the Pope heard that all had confessed, they say he wept; one must needs look at the hands, however, and not at the eyes; and *de his satis*."

The last phrase is an allusion to Clement VIII's readiness to weep at anything, which was certainly due to a weakness of the lachrymal glands.[1] When he said mass,

1 Guido Bentivoglio: Memorie, pp. 192-193.

as he did every day with deep devotion, he abandoned himself to "a great effusion of tears." [1] When he went barefoot in a procession, though tormented by gout, he would weep; when he climbed the Scala Santa, he would weep. He wept for sad things and for gay, as when the keys of the Castle of Ferrara were delivered to him. Henry IV of France was wont to laugh at the trait; asking the Papal Nunzio for news of the Holy Father's health, he would add: "Does he still weep?"

Such feminine readiness with tears was the more surprising in him, for its contrast with his authoritative manner,[2] his almost gigantic body, and his fits of rage. Physically he was very tall and robust; at the time of our story, he was fat, pale-visaged, and white-haired. Paruta says that his constitution was "very strong and stout both by nature and by long custom, as he had long been auditor of the Rota, and was well fitted to bear fatigues." Referring to his bursts of anger, Paruta again says: "Being sometimes unable to bridle them, he lapses into deeds and words little fitting the dignity of so great a prince, and he gives an impression of being a very different man from that which he commonly is and from that which he wishes to appear in men's estimation." His anxiety to win good opinions was proved by the fact that he "is displeased when he hears that things have been reported about him which display a different view of him from that which he would wish to be held. And sometimes he has lamented to me that in this city he was maligned and held in a different conceit from that which it seemed to him he merited." [3] One may judge from this how he must have grieved at the wave of censure which was aroused by the torture of the Cenci and especially by the confiscation of their property, which he was later induced to restore!

For, as we shall see, the rigorous punishment of the

[1] Dolfin: Relazione, IV, p. 455; Paruta, *op. cit.*, II, p. 544; Gius. De Novaes, Elementi della storia de' Sommi Pontefici, IX, p. 76.
[2] De Novaes, IX, p. 76.
[3] Paruta, II, p. 544.

Cenci was the act of one "who wished to know everything, read everything, and dispose of everything." [1] During his pontificate Clement VIII carried out notable enterprises, was learned, studious, "of exemplary habits, of an innocent life, and of agreeable nature." But the punishment of the Cenci and the burning of Giordano Bruno have robbed him forever of that popular esteem for which he so yearned.

On August 21st, in Molella's quarters, the muleteer, Agostino de Amicis of Castelvecchio di Norcia, husband of Cilla, the sister of Fra' Pietro and Olimpio, was examined.

He knew why Fra' Pietro was imprisoned; it was because he had hidden his brother in his room at La Minerva; the witness had also seen Fra' Pietro there talking with Signore Cesare Cenci, whom the witness said, falsely, that he had met there for the first time. Cesare had taken the witness with him and had delivered to him the horse on which Olimpio rode to Anticoli, accompanied by Michele Borghese and Papirio Alessandri. Not to be behind the others, Agostino also lied and concealed his own journey to Anticoli with Fra' Pietro. For that reason he was not released, but was sent to Corte Savella. There he confessed on September 1st that before the occurrences he had just related, he had already gone to summon Signor Cesare and by his order had brought the striped doublet to Olimpio. But this time also there was not a word about his journey to Anticoli.

Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci being "respited" to Tordinona, and Lucrezia and Beatrice "respited" to Corte Savella, their rooms were soon filled by a great coming and going of advocates, relatives, servants, friends, and acquaintances. It was now that Farinaccio settled upon his most unhappy scheme for their defence. On August 21st an *avviso* said of Giacomo and Bernardo: "They are

[1] Dolfin: Relazione, IV, p. 455. See also Paruta, *op. cit.*, II, p. 543.

... in Tordinona, where they deal freely with outsiders, and on Sunday morning [August 15th] their kinsmen came to see them, and they dined all together. And the chief advocates do not lack hope of saving, if not the lives, at least the property whole or in part, it being said that even if the entail be not quashed, the Camera would get out of the business more than 150 thousand scudi in confiscations, between inheritances and other things."

Now that the plan of defence was settled, all the clan, relatives and servants, set forth in a feverish hunt for new witnesses who should present themselves to depose in the Cenci's favour. Francesco Scotusio, their solicitor, persuaded Mario Fano and Americo Poderetti, school-master, to make declarations about Bernardo's simplicity of mind. Ottavio Tignosino [1] sought the intervention of the farm-owners Fabrizio Buri and Cesare Santoni, that they might tell of Francesco Cenci's attempt to vent his foul passions on Curzio Velli. Francesco, son of Cesare Cenci, approached Girolama, widow of Antonio of Capranica, Emilia, widow of Guglielmo of Milan, and Giovanni Baldo, carriage dealer, that they might depose upon other villainies, as we are to learn. Then Lucrezia and Beatrice had Calidonia Lorenzini brought to them; they talked with her in person. Finally a certain Bastiana, who had been in the Castel Sant' Angelo with Beatrice, went with Lavinia, natural daughter of Francesco Cenci and wife of Morea, to the Emilia just mentioned, to persuade her to depose concerning an unseemly action of Signor Francesco. Then Silla Morico, the solicitor, went at the behest of the Cenci ladies, to confer also with the Lorenzini woman. All these just mentioned did in fact present themselves before the Court, as we shall soon see.

[1] Tignosino had been and was later "deputed by the Carità to give the alms to the prisoners." Once when he was returning from Tordinona whither he had been on this errand, he was seriously wounded. In the document relating the fact there is evidence that it occurred on a Christmas Eve; but as Bertolotti removed the document from its proper place to include it in the Cenci papers, without keeping track of the file from which he removed it, it is now impossible for us to establish the year of the occurrence.

Coincidently with the rounding up of these witnesses, the Cenci women made an effort to invoke pity by means of petitions. Filippo Scolari has produced one of Lucrezia, undated, and one of Beatrice, of August 20th.[1] In the first, Lucrezia has recourse to the Pope, saying that "if she had been defiled in the murder of Signor Francesco as were the others, she would not supplicate His Holiness as she does, *genibus flexis*.[2] . . ." May he pitifully be content, she continues, to give ear to her particular case from the lips of Signor Ulisse, judge of the case, in company with another judge, be he who he may; for she fears that owing to the length of the trial, Signor Ulisse may have erred as to the gravity of her responsibility; "for if only Your Holiness may actually be pleased mercifully to hear him, your petitioner will support any manner of death, however heavy it be, and she will not complain." Another petition of the same time and to the same purpose was directed to Cardinal Sforza: "Your Most Illustrious Highness is supplicated to be pleased to speak with Cardinal Aldobrandino, that he may deign to call the Chief Prosecutor and Signor Ulisse Moscato, judge in the Cenci case, before they make their report to His Holiness. And may he be pleased to order them that in the special case of Signora Lucrezia Petronia they may kindly consider diligently all the arguments brought forward by her advocates in defence of Donna Lucrezia, considering which it is believed that she cannot be punished by the ordinary penalty. And because she has never treated for her husband's death, and although indeed she consented therein, yet it is to be seen from that same trial that she revoked her consent; and also because her consent was given through fear of being herself murdered, as well as through her situation alone away from her own home in the hands of assassins, her enemies; and because of many other reasons which have been stated by the advocates, and for which she desires a consideration with

1 Filippo Scolari: Beatrice Cenci. Causa celebre criminale del secolo XVI. (Milan, 1855), p. 147.

2 On bended knees.—*Trans.*

every diligence; because of all this she will hold herself under deep obligation to Your Most Illustrious Highness."

Beatrice also petitioned Cardinal Aldobrandino, on August 20th. The tone and purport of her plea are little different: "At this last moment of my life I know no other to whom to have recourse than to the great mercy of Your Illustrious Highness, whom I supplicate by the bowels of Jesus Christ that he may be pleased to hear my horrible case and that of my stepmother from Avvocato Farinaccio, and to beseech for them an audience with His Holiness. For if His Holiness and Your Lordship will vouchsafe for charity's sake to learn the truth about the matter, I shall be content to suffer any penalty, and it will not be heavy upon me however grave it be, for I shall believe that it is so ordered in the most just and most holy minds of His Beatitude and Your Illustrious Highness, for whom I shall continually pray God as long as I live." [1] Two days later (August 22d) was written the letter from Beatrice to Tignosino: "I am certain that Your Honour does all it is possible for human mind to do. I am happy that the case is now to be determined and for the rest I leave all in the hands of Signor Prospero Farinaccio and Your Honour, and you will act with energy therein, I am certain. Look well, by God's love, to our aid, as you always indeed do; and most kindly . . . come here a little to us, for so may we better speak; and I kiss your hand."

On August 28th began the hearing of the witnesses for the defence. It was prolonged at intervals until September 9th, or two days before the execution.

Angelo Calcina, Roman, limited himself to saying "that he had heard" from Cardinal Salviati that Lucrezia and Beatrice Cenci had sent to the Pope from La Petrella a petition to be removed therefrom. The first asked to be restored to Rome, the other to be put in a nunnery at Aquila. Fabrizio Buri, Roman, and Cesare Santoni of

[1] Scolari: *op. cit.*, pp. 147-148.

Rignano told that they had heard Curzio Velli relate, *viva voce*, the base proposals made to him by Signor Francesco Cenci, when Curzio had gone to La Petrella at Cenci's invitation.

Mario Fano, uncle of Francesco's sons, and Americo Poderetti, schoolmaster, both deposed about the alleged weak-mindedness of Bernardo. The first said: "He is an overgrown boy who is not intelligent as youths should be, and sometimes I have thought his wits rather twisted than otherwise. . . . He came to see me sometimes . . . and he would speak and come to no conclusion, and I could make no sense out of it. And after his father's death I saw him go to play with the boys of the school [of Poderetti], and I heard him jesting and frolicking with them; . . . and on my telling him that he should be sensible and quit himself like one of his rank, he began to laugh. And he would go about all dirty." He had further heard it said that in the very narrow court between the Cenci palace and San Tommaso, he was wont to play at hand ball with a wooden ball,[1] which provoked "a danger that the ball might bound backward and hit him on the head." Americo Poderetti of Monte San Savino, who kept a boarding-school and had had Bernardo under him, testified: "I would say to him sometimes: 'Do such a thing'; and once in a hundred years he would do it; and when I asked him why he had not done it, this Bernardo would say that he had not understood . . . and I may say also that when we were at Latin composition, Bernardo would write one word for another, and the same way in reciting and in repetitions, but this happens with other scholars." He said, however, that the boy was obedient, and was "soft natured, so as to let himself be easily persuaded to good; but as to persuasion to evil I know not." Remaining thoughtful a little, he pursued: "The father treated him very ill, and made him suffer. He had some dreadful mattresses on which he slept; and I believe that those in the hospital of San Giacomo are better!"

Emilia, widow of Guglielmo of Milan, also deposed

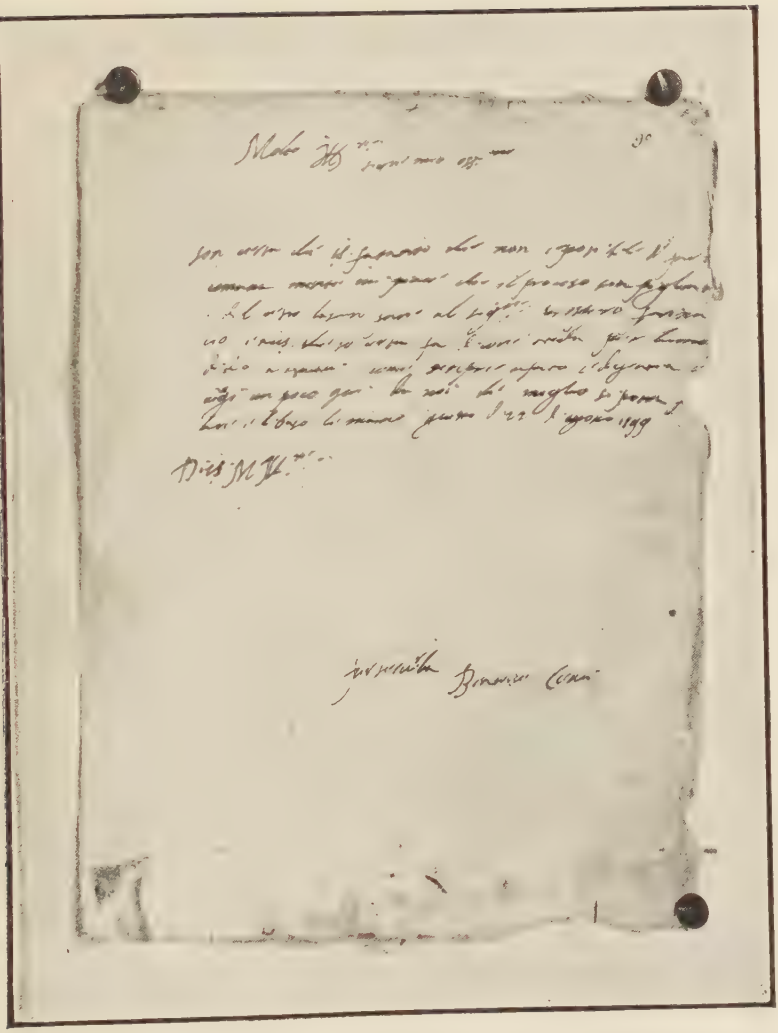
[1] "La boccia con il pallomaglio."—*Trans.*

about Cenci's ill treatment of Bernardo and Beatrice. It was Emilia who had picked up the unconscious Bernardo when he had leaped from a high window to escape his father's wrath.

We now come to the accusation of incest made against Francesco Cenci, that is, the accusation that he had violated his own daughter, Beatrice, or that he had attempted to violate her. The charge was the basis of the defence adopted by Farinaccio and by all who have written in her favour against Francesco and against Clement VIII, on the ground that Clement did not take into account Beatrice's sacred right to defend her own honour, and, if her honour was sullied, to take vengeance. To no other aspect of the case have we devoted more patient documentary research than this, ignoring not even the vaguest allusion that could throw light upon it. We were determined to discover and tell the truth, objectively, and at all costs, without the romancer's preconceptions, without the advocate's special pleading, without any "political" purpose favourable or unfavourable to Popes, cardinals, governors, or judges.

The first thing to note is that in all the trial records from November, 1598, until August of the following year, or in more than fifty examinations, there is not the slightest hint of any such deed, either in the testimony of those who indeed told of Cenci's maltreatment of his wife and daughter, or in that of Beatrice herself, when, abandoning her first line of defence (the attempt to prove that she could have no reason for vengeance upon her father, not even having been struck by him), she admitted that she had been flogged with the bull-pizzle and had been driven to despair by a pitiless and unjust imprisonment.

It was only in her last examination, of August 19th, 1599, when Farinaccio had already accepted the direction of the Cenci case, that she told of her stepmother saying, in order to persuade her to the parricide: "This father of yours will hold us here forever, and he will abuse



Letter from Beatrice Cenci to Ottavio Tignosino
(August 22, 1599)

you and rob you of your honour and do you a thousand ills."

Ten days later, Beatrice, writing to Cardinal Aldobrandino, said to him: "By the bowels of Jesus Christ be pleased to hear my horrible case and that of my stepmother from the advocate, Farinaccio." Some have thought that by the words "my horrible case" [1] Beatrice alluded to the violence wreaked upon her by her father. The succeeding words: "and that of my stepmother" would seem to exclude this hypothesis. However, this letter also is posterior to Farinaccio's assumption of Beatrice's defence. She said on the 22d: "I leave all in the hands of Signore Prospero Farinaccio."

Let us now examine what the foundations for the terrible charge really are.

On August 29th Calidonia Lorenzini presented herself before Moscato, in the Corte Savella, saying: "I have come of myself, without being cited, before Your Honour to be examined." She pursued: "I am informed concerning the matter I am to be examined upon; and I am informed because when I went to visit Signora Beatrice and Signora Lucrezia, that was on St. Bartholomew's Day [Tuesday, August 24th], here in the Corte Savella prisons, those ladies told me that they had had me sought for to be examined. And they said naught else to me, except that I should be examined and should tell the truth. And so yesterday a man named Signor Silla, I know not his surname, came to my house at the Four Fountains, and said to me: 'Come, Calidonia, if you would do this service of having yourself examined, now is the time.'"

We are already acquainted with the tragi-comic misadventures of Calidonia at La Petrella; we know her querulous complaints and her endless loquacity. It is needless to repeat them here. She told of everything; but it was only after a query put by the defence that she said, hesitating a little: "One evening after Signor Francesco had returned, it was before Christmas, Signora Lucrezia came to where we servants, Girolama and I, were, and

[1] L'horrendo caso mio."—*Trans.*

she told us that she was angered with Signor Francesco; and she remained there less than a quarter of an hour; and forthwith Signor Francesco came to our door and called her to come to bed; and so she went and slept with her husband that night. And while Lucrezia was there with us, I heard a voice, it seemed to me that of Beatrice, saying: 'I do not want to be burned!' And I heard nothing else. The following morning I asked Signora Beatrice what had ailed her when she said those words: 'I do not want to be burned.' She replied that it was nothing, and then she told me that her father had come into her bed, and she had said that she did not wish him to sleep there; and she said no more to me." In response to Moscato's questions, she added that in the room she and Girolama occupied "there was no light, for they had put it out; and it might have been the third hour of night at the latest." She said that she and Girolama were already in their beds; that Lucrezia had come without a light and had lain down beside Girolama on her bed; Girolama had not risen; Signor Francesco had likewise appeared without a light; their room adjoined that of Signor Francesco, where on the contrary a light was burning; Girolama did not rise when Lucrezia went away; and finally Signor Francesco had closed the door.

She continued: "Signora Lucrezia came to our room that evening to sleep, wearing her dress; she had put it on, but it was unlaced; . . . she came to our room and lay down thus dressed; but yet she did not get into the bed. She was weeping and spoke not at all."

"How far was your bed from that of Girolama?"

"It was close, but far enough so one could pass between to make them up. . . . Our beds were distant from the door the full length of the room."

"If there was no light, how can you say that Signor Francesco closed the door?"

"I do not know exactly if it was Signor Francesco who pulled the door to. I heard Signor Francesco speaking, as I have said, for Signora Lucrezia had entered into our chamber, and had thrust at the door and pushed away the

stone, and the light which was in Signor Francesco's chamber shone into the chamber where we were sleeping. . . . I was alone and I heard no one when I asked Beatrice what had happened with her father, that she should say that she did not wish to be burned."

"Do you think that Girolama heard Beatrice's words, that she did not wish to be burned?"

"I think that she too heard them . . . for I was not asleep nor was she."

"How did it chance that after such a happening, no words, no comment, were exchanged between yourself and Girolama?"

"No, Signor, we did not speak of it at all; Girolama did not even say to me that she had heard those words, and I never spoke with her at all about them."

"Why did you not say from the beginning that you heard Beatrice's words? Why did you not give the detail that Signore Francesco wished to sleep with his daughter and therefore drove Lucrezia out of his room?"

"Signore, I did not tell you at the beginning, when Your Honour asked it of me, all these things I am now saying, because shame forbade me. But now that Your Honour has read to me out of that paper [1] which you hold in your hand . . . I have told them to you."

When Calidonia's examination was resumed, after an interruption, she was asked: "When Lucrezia entered your room, did you and Girolama say nothing to her?"

"Neither I nor Girolama said any word on account of Lucrezia who had come there to our room; and we said nothing while Signora Lucrezia was there, nor yet after she had departed and returned to Signor Francesco and to her own bed."

She was again asked how all this could have taken place without arousing a single exchange of words between herself and Girolama.

"No, Signore, I did not talk with Girolama, nor did she speak with me, either on that evening when Signora Lucrezia came, or later, about what I heard Signora

[1] The list of questions to be put.

Beatrice complaining that evening in her room where was Signor Francesco too." Then: "We women could have entered Signor Francesco's chamber without the door's being opened especially, for it was not bolted, but only shut, so that any one of us could have entered there; and if he had shut it with the bolt, I would have heard it. On the following morning, when Signora Beatrice told me what had occurred with her father, from which I supposed that he had wished to have dealings with her and she had refused, she said to me that I should speak of it to no one, but should hold my peace."

She again repeated that she alone had asked Beatrice what her father had wanted of her on that evening when Lucrezia had come into the bedchamber!

The Court evidently was incredulous, and therefore, instead of releasing her, had her held *incommunicado*. Thus she was kept until the very eve of the Cenci's punishment.

We are now to hear the testimony of Girolama, widow of Antonio of Capranica.

"I have come to be examined because Signor Francesco Cenci, a young man,[1] begged me to come and be examined; and a companion of mine named Giulia who stays with me—we live behind Sant' Apostolo—she told me that a summons had come saying that I should come to be examined." Witness further declared: "I have not been given any promise or money or goods if I would come for examination. . . . I have come here to tell the truth."

We already know all the facts about Girolama's stay in La Petrella. Here we may confine ourselves to the episode already narrated by Calidonia. One evening, said the new witness, "Signor Francesco and Signora Lucrezia having supped, Signor Francesco said to her: 'Begone to the chamber of those women,' meaning me and Calidonia, for they used to sup in the chamber where Signor Francesco and Signora Lucrezia slept. Then this Signora Lucrezia replied: 'Why do you wish me to go? I do not wish to go,

[1] Son of Cesare Cenci and therefore cousin of Lodovica Velli, wife of Giacomo Cenci.

because I took you for husband to sleep with you.' And Signor Francesco answered: 'Go in there!' and so Signora Lucrezia went out of Signor Francesco's bedchamber and came to the room of Calidonia and me, and she fell down on my bed; for Calidonia and I did not sleep together. And I said to Signora Lucrezia: 'What does this strange thing mean?' And she said: 'Seek to know no more. Do you not know that Signor Francesco is a vexatious person?' And then I too went to bed. And a little later he called to Signora Lucrezia, and so Signora Lucrezia went to her husband's bedchamber and shut the door. And we all went to sleep then, and I heard no more."

"Did you hear anything when father and daughter remained alone?"

"I heard nothing after Lucrezia had come into my bedchamber where I was sleeping, and she lay down on the bed with me; and had I heard anything, poor widow-woman though I be, I would have risen up and gone there."

"But would you have heard it if Beatrice or Francesco had said anything?"

"Yes, Signore, for if either Signor Francesco or Signora Beatrice had raised their voices or indeed made any noise or said any word, I would have heard it, for we were in the antechamber; and I would have heard it all the more as I had not gone to bed and was wide awake, and Lucrezia and Calidonia also were awake. And I did not go to bed in any case, while Lucrezia was lying on my bed, as she was my mistress; but indeed after she was called by Signor Francesco and had gone to her husband's room, then did I go to bed. And Signora Lucrezia drew the chamber door to; and I heard when Signor Francesco said to Signora Lucrezia: 'Shut yonder door,' when she returned to him."

"Do you know why Lucrezia came into the room you and Calidonia occupied?"

"I was in Signor Francesco's room after supper, warming his bed, because Signor Francesco said straightway after finishing his meal that he was going to bed, and he

had his feet scratched and scraped, for such was his custom. And that same evening, after he was in bed, Signor Francesco said to Beatrice: 'Take the cloth and scratch'; that is, he told Beatrice to take the cloth and scratch him though he did not call her by name. And Beatrice took a towel and began to scratch his feet, and I left Lucrezia, Signor Francesco and Beatrice, and went to my bedroom; and afterwards I heard Signor Francesco say to Lucrezia that she should come there into our room for a little time. And then everything took place as I have said before." She continued: "Beatrice told me sometimes that she scratched her father's testicles; and she said also that she used to dream that I too was scratching them, and I said to her: 'That will I never do! . . .' Otherwise I did not speak to Calidonia, nor she to me, after Signora Lucrezia had departed, nor before. And I went to bed as I have said; and all gave themselves to sleep."

"Did you seek any explanation from Beatrice as to what took place?"

"Yes, Signore; the following morning I spoke to Signora Beatrice privately, between myself and her alone, and I asked her what she had done in the evening in her father's room while Signora Lucrezia was with us serving-maids in our bedchamber, until she was called back by Signor Francesco. And she told me it was nothing other than doing what she was accustomed to do to her father, to scratch him; and she told me naught else. . . . I do not know at all if Calidonia spoke to Beatrice in the morning about this matter of which I had spoken to her. . . . The door of our room was shut when Signora Lucrezia entered; it was shut of itself, for it was a door which swung shut of itself. There was nothing on this door to hold it shut, nor was there any prop or wooden bar or stone or anything."

"Was there a light in your room?"

"Yes, Signore, the light was there when Lucrezia came into our chamber and cast herself on my bed, for Calidonia and I were not yet in bed, and we had the light lit, and Calidonia was on her bed all dressed; and we did not

put out the light until I went to bed, when Signora Lucrezia had gone. I had left the light in Signor Francesco's room, and when Lucrezia came into our room the light was there also, and when she returned it was there likewise, and I know because I saw it there. In my judgment it might have been the fourth or fifth hour of night when Lucrezia came into our room."

She replied to one of the questions put her: "I know nothing on that head, if any one was present when Signor Francesco had to do with his wife." Then, after a little thought, she resumed: "I know well this, that Signor Francesco was wont to go about the house in shirt and doublet and a pair of drawers, and when he urinated in the evening it was necessary to hold the urinal for him under his shirt, and sometimes one and sometimes another of us four women was obliged to hold it; and it was also necessary to hold the close-stool for him, that is, it was necessary to bring it to him there beside the fire. . . . It is true that in the same room where Signor Francesco slept with his wife, he made Signora Beatrice sleep in another bed at no great distance; but it is indeed true that when Signor Francesco returned from Rome I put some sheets there between the two beds, sewing them to rods so that the girl could not see when Signor Francesco had to do with his wife."

At this point the questions closely defined the subjects of her replies in order not to allow her to stray off into idle talk. Girolama, in one of her answers, denied that Beatrice "had said that her father wished to have affairs with her." "I know nothing of this, and she did not say it to me. . . . I do not know at all that Signor Francesco attempted to violate Signora Beatrice."

Readers may now judge for themselves. They are now for the first time enabled to know textually the depositions of the two serving-women,[1] and they are aware that

[1] Sebastiani in the notes to De Angelis (pp. 177-178) says: "two serving-women of Francesco Cenci, Leonilda Saracinelli and Secondina Scanni, housemaid, said that they had more than once seen their master, early in the morning, clad in his shirt, in Signora Beatrice's bedroom." We do not know the document or testimony

there is no other reference to this scabrous subject in the whole long course of the trial.

Such evidence, brought forward at the last moment, containing ambiguous indications and words which had not been previously given or reported even by those persons who were tragically eager to escape death—such evidence, following on Farinaccio's decision upon his plan of defence, frankly does not convince us—and we are certainly not suspect of partisanship for the loathsome figure of Francesco Cenci.

Certain facts should be noted. Calidonia states that Lucrezia had entered her room and Girolama's, saying that she had come because she was "angered" with her husband; Girolama says it was Francesco who had sent her there. Calidonia says both she and her fellow-servant were in bed; Girolama first made the same statement, then corrected herself and said that both were still dressed. Calidonia said she had heard Beatrice exclaim: "I do not want to be burned!" Girolama asserted that if such a phrase had been said she could not have failed to hear it. Calidonia recounted that, on seeing Lucrezia appear, neither she nor Girolama had said a word; Girolama declared that she asked, "What does this strange thing mean?" Calidonia said that when Lucrezia entered it was the second or third hour of night at the latest; Girolama on the contrary that it was the fourth or fifth. Calidonia affirmed that their room was dark because they had extinguished the light; Girolama said that the light was lit and remained lit. Calidonia said that Girolama did not rise from the bed when Lucrezia departed; Girolama said that she did not go to bed so long as Lucrezia remained.

Further, Calidonia hastened to note—indeed, twice—that when Beatrice revealed to her the foul proposal made to her by her father, the two were alone, "and no

from which Sebastiani may have taken this bit of information; we fear that he has confused the women with Calidonia and Girolama, part of whose examinations we have reproduced. We have already spoken of a Secondina, daughter of Maestro Vincenzo; she was first the servant, then the concubine of Francesco, and bore a child to him. But who is this Leonilda Saracinelli?

one heard it." It was only a proposal, she was careful to state, for Beatrice told her further "that she had refused." But then who would find Calidonia's other statement credible, that never, never, was there any talk, nor even a single word, between Girolama and herself on the subject? The assertion that two such garrulous busybodies as these could be present at a scene of this sort and find no subject for the slightest comment or observation would arouse incredulity if found in the most childish fable!

To strengthen the testimonies of Calidonia and Girolama, a search was made for other women to make affidavit to Francesco Cenci's frantic lusts. One may even say that to collect such evidence now became the sole preoccupation of Beatrice's defenders. Witnesses had been sought who should tell of Cenci's base intentions upon Curzio Velli; now fresh testimony was collected for other deeds of the same character. An attempt was made to persuade Emilia, widow of Guglielmo, Milanese, formerly Francesco's serving-maid, to speak of special crapulous episodes; but she said: "While I was in the service of Signor Francesco, I went sometimes in a coach through Rome with Signor Francesco and his ladies, and we also went sometimes even to Santa Croce; but I have never seen Signor Francesco do any tricks, nor any trifling or embracing in the coach, nor have I seen him kiss Signora Lucrezia nor Signora Beatrice. People have been telling me too much that they wished me to say that Signor Francesco knew Lucrezia carnally in the coach; but I said that I could not say these things because I had not seen them."

"Who was it that wished to have you say these things?"

"That Bastiana who is in prison with Signora Beatrice in the Castello told me to; she told me this three days ago in my house, whither she came together with Signora Lavinia, wife of Signor Emilio della Morea, and she too told me to say it, and she told me this too as coming from Beatrice and Signora Lucrezia. . . . They did not promise me or give me anything that I should depose that I had

seen Signor Francesco carnally knowing his wife, Lucrezia, in the presence of Signora Beatrice."

Again on September 9th, when the fate of the Cenci was decided, the wretched Giovanni Baldo, already well known to us, presented himself to testify; he had been egged on to do so by young Francesco, son of Cesare Cenci. He began with the words: "I have nothing in the world and lack clothes to my back, and I go thus in rags as you see." He told of the basest and vilest of Signor Francesco's habits; he said that one day he "seized his wife Lucrezia and cast her on the bed and forced her" in Beatrice's presence, so that the girl "went out and shut the door of the room where Signor Francesco used to sleep and where he had cast Lucrezia on the bed." There can be no doubt as to the many erotic excesses of Francesco Cenci; the proofs are too numerous, as we have seen in the course of this book. But nothing has ever indicated, nor have the most hostile witnesses charged, that, for example, he performed any shameful actions on the persons of his own children, even in his worst days, during that period when he was imprisoned in the Capitol. The lack was not due to any scruples in his character, but to the fact that even in the most vicious there often exists a natural and general repugnance to "the fusion with one's own blood" which preserves brothers and sisters, parents and offspring, from incestuous contacts, and saves humanity from physical, intellectual and moral ruin.[1]

No: the vague and contradictory words of two wretched servants, induced to testify at the last moment by methods with which every one is familiar, and whose evidence is in contradiction with all the results of the long trial, cannot persuade us to accept that fact which bulks largest

[1] We have paid much attention to the opinion of illustrious jurists and psychiatrists on this subject. They have confirmed our statement that were it not for such an instinctive repugnance this crime would assume an appalling frequency, disastrous for humanity, on account of the constant stimulus to sexual relations and the facilities for secret cohabitation within families. In the *Annales a Greg. XIII ad Clem. VIII*, mss., in the Bibl. Vallicelliana in Rome there is an allusion to Francesco Cenci's attempted incest., but the narrative is of the 17th century.

in Farinaccio's defence and in the story of Beatrice. Indeed, had her judges been capable of any impulse of pity whatsoever, the iniquities committed upon her by her abominable father should have sufficed to move their hearts in her favour. Her youth harassed by cruelties, the denial of marriage, the denial even of the melancholy tranquillity of the cloister, the harsh and unmerited imprisonment inflicted on an innocent girl, the flogging administered when she pleaded for pity—all gives a measure of justification, though not excuse, to the vigorous and decisive revolt of her spirit against one who must have seemed to her, through his other vices as well, not man, but beast—not father, but slave-driver. If there is any man who cares to maintain that her decapitation was just, we in response are ready to proclaim the appalling death of her monstrous father as no less justified.

The fact remains, it may be said, that Lucrezia left her husband's room and came into that of the maid-servants. But even admitting the fact as true, what intimate of the Cenci, we may ask, has not testified that disputes between Lucrezia and her husband were frequent? Might she not very well have said to Girolama, who asked her why she had come: "Do you not know that Signor Francesco is a vexatious person?" and to Calidonia "that she was angered with Signor Francesco?"

Farinaccio's defence of Beatrice was based almost exclusively on the results of this final testimony—testimony which he himself had obtained. It began thus, without further ado: "Although Beatrice Cenci has impiously promoted the death of her father, Francesco, yet is it true, and has been held most credible, that this Francesco maltreated said Beatrice by holding her in dark rooms shut fast in the manner of prison-cells, and attempted to deflower her virginity." [1] He proceeded so to the end, enforcing every argument with an example of such deeds

1 Prospero Farinaccio: *Consilia sive Responsa atque Decisiones causarum criminalium* (Lyons, 1610) pp. 337-340. For the fragments which we reproduce, we follow, with slight variations, the version of Scolari (*op. cit.*, pp. 100-106); he prints also the original

from antiquity or with a statement from some great writer. His purpose was not merely to make a show of erudition; it was in fact the common practice of those days in criminal cases. In the absence of any code of laws, drawn up with a general intention, on which judicial decisions might be based, advocates were obliged to reinforce their pleas with the opinions of jurisconsults, historians, philosophers, even poets, and with references to similar cases and decisions rendered thereon.

Farinaccio, therefore, indulges in a little excursion among the incests of antiquity, including those of Semiramis, Cyane, Medullina. But "what seems of especial weight for the exoneration of these unhappy women," he declares, "is the law *De Sicariis*, . . . wherein it is said that she should go scot free from penalty who slays him who would attempt her ravishment . . . and wherein it says that the fear of rape is greater than the fear of death." He adduced other quotations and examples "to serve for Beatrice's exculpation. . . ." Then with reference to the fact for which the testimony of Angelo Calcina was also sought, he said: "Nor should the Prosecutor oppose the argument that if Beatrice was tempted by her father to this defloration, she should not have killed him, but should have accused him, as appears suggested by the Roman laws. For in fact not only was her liberty and all facility for accusation reft from her by her father, while he kept her shut and under key in her rooms, but Beatrice did continually send advices and letters to Rome, and letters in which she bewailed the evil treatments of her father and asked succour of her kin; whence it even happened that petitions were brought to the Holy Father; and these are all facts which may be regarded as conclusively proven. One may besides reply to the Prosecutor with one word alone, that even in the case alleged by him, the law condemns the parricide not to death, but to deportation, for killing without bringing any charge; if

text (pp. 149-156). See also Ant. Torrigiani: *Clemente VIII e il processo criminale della Beatrice Cenci* (Florence, 1872), pp. 230-243; Bertolotti, pp. 434-448; Rinieri, pp. 427-439, etc.

Sepulchre of Farinaccio
In Church of St. Sylvester, Rome

accused had brought charges and not killed, she would have gone quit of any penalty whatsoever, as the commentary very justly informs us." He then discussed the natural comment one might make that Beatrice had obtained her father's death some time after the attempted rape; he came to the conclusion "that a just grievance mitigates the blame, even for one who kills another after a space of time."

And his conclusion: "All, then, that Beatrice did may be said to have been done through her peril and her fear of that violation, imminent or to come later; and therefore on this account she should be absolved of guilt just as much as though she had killed in defence of her own honour; and if she was peradventure in very deed deflowered, she killed in vengeance for the wrong suffered."

This, and naught else, was Farinaccio's argument in rebuttal; and yet it was the only argument which had no solid basis in the trial; on the contrary, it seems to have been seized upon at the last moment. The Vatican *Summarium* omits any reference to the last depositions in the defence. (This *Summarium* is held by some, wrongly, to have been compiled for the defendants; whereas they had the complete copy of the record. It is held by others, and rightly, to have been prepared for submission to Clement VIII, to enable him to render judgment without being obliged to read a record of nearly five thousand pages.) This lack in the *Summarium* has led some to accuse the Court of having maliciously concealed from the defendants or from the Pope essential elements in favour of the Cenci. It is strange that passion can lead men so far astray! The *Summarium* was drawn up immediately after Giacomo's "respite" (August 14th), and that of Lucrezia, Beatrice, and Bernardo (August 16th). Thus the last examination partially reproduced therein is naturally of August 16th.

It may now be asked: "Were the examinations for the defence, begun a fortnight later (August 29th), known to the lawyers and to the Pope? Is it true that these testimonies were concealed from them?"

Far from being ignorant of them, the lawyers provoked them; it is sufficient proof of this to notice how Farinaccio makes use almost exclusively of the depositions of Calidonia, Girolama, and Angelo Calcina. As for Clement VIII, he, "so well acquainted with the study of the laws and the cases of the Rota" cannot have failed to receive or study the facts that Farinaccio, in his argument, laid under his very eyes.

Nay, more. Farinaccio, passing from the defence of Beatrice to that of Bernardo, says: "As for Bernardo, though, being implicated in the discussion of this parricide, he confesses having lent his consent, with Giacomo, to the work of the assassin Olimpio, I lay first of all before the eyes of Your Holiness his tender age, he being a minor. Nay, at the time this crime was committed, he had not yet touched, so I am given to believe, his seventeenth year.[1] Hence it follows that . . . by reason of his age, mercy should be extended to him, and his penalty diminished." Here Farinaccio enters into a long legal disquisition on the guilt of minors, and on the distinction between those who merely give consent or counsel in a crime and the instigator and mandatory. He cautions the Holy Father that Bernardo is but half-witted, so that "it is no great marvel if perchance he was cunningly led by the persuasions of his brother Giacomo to lend his assent to those things of which Giacomo was treating with the assassin Olimpio. And thus, by reason of his imbecility and debility of mind alone, particularly in conjunction with his tender age, he would seem to be exempted from the ordinary penalty."

But the weak-mindedness of Bernardo was also merely a method of defence inauspiciously devised at the last moment by Farinaccio. There had been no word on this subject in the long course of the trial previous to the examinations of Mario Fano (August 31, 1599) and of Americo Poderetti (September 3d). The servant, Emilia, had even said outright: "While I was in the house, Signor

[1] As we shall see, his age was 17 years and 25 days.

Bernardo was a boy and was as intelligent as the others."[1] The eight examinations of the boy himself had clearly borne out the servant's estimate.

Farinaccio continued: "When Giacomo confessed his sins to the priest, and when the priest would not absolve him if first he did not revoke all he had falsely invented to the hurt of others, Giacomo did not hesitate to clear Bernardo of blame, solemnly and in writing. And this exculpation for the disburdening of his conscience he sent, as I understand, to the Most Illustrious Signor Cardinal Alessandrino,[2] that he should report it to Your Holiness."

The letter to which Farinaccio refers has been often reproduced in manuscripts and books.[3] A copy of it is also attached to the trial record; this we reproduce:

"Confessing myself as best I know how, and as is fitting for one who stands in my straits, I explained to my confessor that I had falsely deposed that my brother, Bernardino, was cognisant of the death of my most unhappy father before he died, a thing which is not true. The confessor finally said to me that this being a very grave wrong to the fame and life and belike also to the soul of a wretched and innocent person, I was obliged in conscience to restore to him his honour and undo as far as I might the wrong caused him. Desiring to ease my conscience and not knowing how to do so, I prayed him to do it in my name, as one whose word and authority in this would avail more than those of any other. But much though I prayed him, and although I conceded him full and free power to reveal all he had heard on this head in my confession, I could not obtain any answer at all, except that it was not expedient that he should shoulder

[1] Famiano Centolini in the *Addizione* to Farinaccio's eighth consultation insists on Bernardo's weak-mindedness. See also Scolari, *op. cit.*, pp. 116, 165-166.

[2] For *Aldobrandino*.

[3] Reproduced by Ottavio Curini, in Farinaccio, *Cons.* 185; Sebastiani, notes to De Angelis, p. 271; Dalbono, pp. 437-439; Rinieri, pp. 266-268, etc.

this charge; hardly could I prevail upon him that, by the license I gave him, he would speak if he should be questioned. Not succeeding in obtaining aught from him, and finding no other means, I have thought and am resolved that it would be fitting and not unpleasing to the pitifulness of Your Most Illustrious Highness, if I should take upon myself this so pious and merciful task for the soul and body of that innocent youth. Therefore by these presents I testify directly to Your Most Illustrious Highness with real and entire fidelity that those words that I said with regard to Bernardo are false and contrary to all truth, and I said them through torture; the truth being that I never confided that matter to him, neither directly in his presence nor through others, and when Olimpio came to my house, Bernardo was there but very little and we did not always speak together. And I am most certain that Bernardo did not treat nor speak to us of that death nor like matters, nor have I, by any other means, any argument or indication that he was either acquiescent in or cognisant of that death before the deed was done, and I hold him as entirely innocent. And now in this wretched state to which my own folly and weakness have reduced me, in these last days wherein I think more of dying than of living and wherein I seek to prepare myself for the other life, it is better that I put aside all I might say for myself and speak only for Bernardo. And so, for the good of my soul and to verify this my sincere declaration and exculpation of him, I call to witness God, the Blessed Virgin, and all the saints of heaven that all I have deposed at that time was false and said under torture, and what I now say is pure truth, and not said for any carnal and human end; indeed I have said no word to Bernardo before writing this. And I now speak because my conscience obliges me thereto, since I cannot be admitted to the sacrament of confession unless I declare this truth. And in order not to weigh down my soul in the torments of Hell, which I have learned to fear through experiencing those of this world, so will I per-

sistently confirm and affirm my words, with my head on the block if it be needful. Further I do give full liberty to my confessor to certify that this is what I feel in my conscience and before God, thus saying and discovering to all the candour and sincerity of my soul in this exculpation; and I further pray that whoever can do so be obliged to make public this exculpation. On the one hand it seems to me that what I now say will be fully believed because it is true, and the contrary, that is that I or others should have trusted in a boy, is not very easily credible. On the other hand I fear that this truth will not have such great force in benefiting that unfortunate youth as my falsity has had in doing him ill, and although the weakness which has ruined me may well make me fearful of offering myself to confirm my words under any torture, as I have said; yet nevertheless I offer myself and protest that if under torture I say the contrary of what I now say, it will be through weakness, and not through lack of truth in my present words. In short, if Your Most Illustrious Highness finds another means, do but indicate it to me and I will take it, whatever it be. But now I know of no other recourse than to supplicate His Holiness, as our most benignant Father and judge, by mediation of Your Most Illustrious Highness that my plea may be accepted, that youth freed from this false imputation, and my soul from its burden, which I thus lay upon the conscience of one who can remedy the matter, who die protesting its verity in the sight of God and appealing to the tribunal of divine justice, and to that mighty last judgment when all truth will be laid bare. In fine, he who is now to die supplicates Your Most Illustrious Highness to lighten his soul by urgently putting this declaration, wherever, however, whenever and with whomsoever you shall deem expedient, in such a place of authority that it will bring to light a truth which has been crushed down and abandoned and which is most important to the salvation of souls and bodies, and therefore very proper for ecclesiastical princes and of much

merit in the sight of God, from whom I call down felicity upon Your Highness and upon myself mercy, humbly kissing the hem of Your Highness's garments.

From Torre di Nona, Aug. 25, 1599

"Di V. S. Ill^{ma} et R^{ma}

aff^{mo} et humiliss.^{o} Servit.^{e}

Jacomo Cenci."

Farinaccio passed from the defence of Bernardo to that of Lucrezia. "Let Your Holiness deign to consider her confession according to the truth that appears from her acts. The truth in fact is this: that, although at the beginning she may indeed have consented to the parricide to be committed by the hand of assassins, at Beatrice's order and command—and perchance also at that of Lucrezia likewise—nevertheless she did in fact revoke her consent and mandate in the actual commission. Moreover, on the day before the crime she sharply persuaded those very assassins to withhold their hands from such villainy, and chased them forth from the rooms whereinto they had entered to bring the deed about; and this she did with the spirit and intention of not further committing the crime; even though later, unknown to her, and seduced by Beatrice alone, the assassins returned the following day and murdered Francesco. It is thus and no otherwise that she confessed the matter; and her confession is attested by the depositions of Marzio and Beatrice. Herein we may apply the proposition that when the instigator withdraws his mandate, even though the crime may later follow, he is no longer held to account either for his mandate or for the crime. And although the wife, through not revealing to her husband the death that was in preparation for him, may perchance be held worthy of punishment for the fact alone that she made no revelation, yet that punishment cannot be understood as involving the extreme penalty and exile, nor yet death and the ordinary penalty, in respect to which it is the general principle that the capital penalty is never applied for failure to discover a crime, except when the crime

was to be committed upon the Prince or the Pope, and is not so applied if the crime be upon any other, including even the case of parricide."

Finally Farinaccio spoke of Giacomo: "Many things might be said which I am constrained to pass over through shortness of time, and I leave them to other writers to propose. This only I remark, that if Beatrice, Giacomo's sister, chief mover in this crime, for the good reason she had, merits some commiseration, it follows that Giacomo, who was only participant and cognisant, cannot by the rule be punished more severely than the chief mover; for agents and accessories may not be punished by other than an equal penalty."

He came thus to his peroration: "O Holy Father, in the terrible shortness of the time that remains in this dire case, I would wish to lend these words of mine wings if only through them Your Holiness might see fit to descend from the Law to some mitigation of the penalty, if only Your Holiness might deign to use his clemency and pity toward these wretched prisoners. They do not look to the sentence of divine Judgment, nor to the mercy of the Law, in which yet they confide greatly; but they look to the most holy judgment of Your Holiness, to Whom on bent knees they humbly submit themselves."

This famous *consulto* of Farinaccio is a poor thing; one must recognise that the unfortunate accused could hardly have been worse served.[1] After making what allowance one will for the custom of the time of drowning the "human" appeal in a flood of quotations and "authorities"; still, the story of the sufferings endured from the father's villainy by the children from their very childhood, their protests against the man who wasted the family wealth to pay the fines of his loathsome crimes,

[1] Some have even thought that Farinaccio was a traitor to the Cenci, being engaged both as their defender and as "criminal judge of Monsignor Taverna." It is true that when Taverna came to Rome it was written: "It is said that he will take as his criminal judge Farinaccio, a man of much skill in this function." But nothing followed this rumour. We may confine ourselves, with Guerrazzi, to calling his defence of the Cenci "unhappy." See Guerrazzi's *Beatrice Cenci*, p. 23.

the description of his black soul, his perversity, his base and evil habits, the repeated pleas of the two women to be freed from his tyranny—especially Beatrice's prayer to be removed to a nunnery—all this might well have touched to fiery eloquence the spirit and the words of the man who was called to defend them before an earthly tribunal, and before him whose exalted office was to represent on earth the kindly justice of Christ.

Historians have existed, to be sure, capable of taking up the defence of Francesco Cenci, merely because he destined a little money to the restoration of chapels, to the dowering of girls, to the saying of masses! Assuredly, too, the sons are sorry figures. But no sane mind can fail to recognise that had they not been tortured and goaded by their father's iniquities, they too would have been better men, and that the parricide would never have taken place.

And yet Farinaccio, hailed as "among the most illustrious jurists who ever taught," cannot touch a single chord of eloquence or of pathos. Corrupt and dissolute to such a degree that Clement VIII said of him: "The flour is good, but the sack is dirty," his secret sympathies may even have been with Francesco Cenci, whose filthy habits he shared.[1]

At any rate, he was so tepid a supporter of his clients that when, a few years later, he gave his brief to be printed he could comment thus: "All were sentenced to the extreme punishment, saving Bernardo, who was condemned to the galleys, with confiscation of property, and also condemned to watch the death of the others, and he was indeed present there. This crime was in fact so horrible and unheard-of (two sons, a daughter and a wife having conspired for the death of their father and husband, respectively, and paying money to this end as well), that it may well be said that only through the utmost benignity of the Most Holy Pontiff was the minor Ber-

[1] For Farinaccio's immorality, see Girolamo Tiraboschi: Storia della letteratura italiana (Milan, 1833) p. 594; Bertolotti, pp. 203 221, etc.

nardo liberated from death. This commutation was also eagerly looked for in the case of his sister Beatrice, if she had been able to show the proof of the exculpation proposed in her favour; but she could not show such proof. *Laus Deo.*" [1]

We also possess the plea in defence presented by another advocate of the Cenci, Planca di Coronato Coronati,[2] who hardly outlived his clients a month and a half.[3] He, too, smothered his argument in "authorities," though adding some scraps from the interrogatories, where Farinaccio reports only one. Moreover, the arguments themselves are quibbling ones. When Giacomo gave his consent, the murder of Signor Francesco had already been attempted by means of bandits: Marzio and Catalano, in certain portions of their testimony do not involve Bernardo, who, besides is an imbecile: Beatrice had defended her virginity from attack by her father: Lucrezia had sought to impede the crime! Coronati, like Farinaccio, displays a full knowledge of the depositions for the defence, but makes use of them with no greater warmth or conviction. The entire psychological element is lacking. Discussion of details takes the place of an examination into the mentality of the accused. For Coronati, as for Farinaccio, the important point is to display vast erudition by the citation of classical texts, judicial sentences, decretals, and Papal briefs and bulls!

[1] Scolari, *op. cit.*, pp. 113 and 157.

[2] It was published by Bertolotti, pp. 446-450, and more correctly by Rinieri, pp. 441-446.

[3] He died October 25, 1599.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE SON OF BEATRICE

An *avviso* from Rome to the Court of Urbino, dated September 1st, stated: "The Cenci are still living, but God knows for how long. To-day their people have again performed the forty hours at the Madonna del Pianto, the wife of Giacomo desiring to go there with the children, but all will be vain."

On September 4th the same informant of the Court of Urbino wrote: "The advocates who went to the Pope in the Cenci case were three: Incoronati, Farinaccio, and Rutilio Altieri. Immediately His Holiness heard them discuss this case, he gave them the weightiest of rebukes, saying that he marvelled advocates should be found in these days who would have the effrontery to defend such proven scoundrels. The advocates humbly rejoined that they were there only to defend justice in order that no injustice be done. His Holiness replied that Bartolomeo of Benevento (this was a minister of much weight in the time of Paul IV) was wont to say that in Rome every sort of crime found defenders; at these words the above-mentioned advocates quit their pleading. A little later the Governor and the Prosecutor having gone to His Beatitude, His Holiness told them how the Advocates of the Cenci had been to him, and how neatly he had discomfited them, and how finally they had left with him their briefs, in which they said some things of moment; and thereby some are moved to augur some good of them, and would to God it were true; but next week we fear for them and so do all."

The pleas in defence of the Cenci must in fact have been presented to the Pope on September 1st and 3rd.

The "director" added in his *avviso* of September 4th: "It is understood that next Thursday, the anniversary

of the murder of Signor Francesco Cenci, its authors will be put to death. Giacomo, the son, will be haled through Rome, torn with pincers and beheaded on the Bridge and then quartered; the girl will have her head taken off in prison, and will then be buried without being set up as a spectacle; and the stepmother with the younger brother, Bernardo, will be decapitated on the Bridge with their other accomplices."

In the anguish of those last days, which the Cenci lived through with little hope and amid many terrors, their spirits turned more and more toward resignation and devotion.

It was easy, therefore, for Virginia Bruno to obtain, in favour of her son, Paolo, their perpetual and "indissoluble" forgiveness for his crime in slaying Cristoforo Cenci. This was granted on August 17th by Giacomo Cenci, on the 19th by Bernardo, and following their example—though probably, in this case, after a heavy payment by Virginia—by Ottavio Pali, on the 28th. He was formerly Cristoforo's servant and had been present at the murder. He too did "give and grant for himself and his heirs perpetual peace and security to Signor Paolo Bruno for whatever encounter, abuse, affront or insult may have been done him on that night when said Signor Cristoforo Cenci was slain in the Island of San Bartolomeo, in whose company was the undersigned."

Following these remissions Virginia Bruno thus invoked the Pope's mercy:

"Virginia, mother of Paolo Bruno, a widow most disconsolate, as her son, Paolo, has for long been outlawed through the death of Cristoforo Cenci, who was by chance wounded by him without any intention of murder; and as her house suffers most grievous hurt and said Paolo is attaint in his life and property, and the mother suffers very bitter grief through the long exile of her son; so now does she supplicate most humbly, etc., the Holy Year of pardon and remission being at hand . . . that Paolo be recalled from exile and restored to civil rights; and

she has already obtained placations and paid to the civil authority all its due, and she offers also to dower a poor girl who is marriageable and comely and her father dead and mother sick, and this girl in peril of her virginity, having passed her twentieth year."

The first of the Cenci to make a will was Giacomo (August 27th); he executed the document in the upper rooms of Tordinona. He asked to be buried in San Tommaso and that masses be said there for his soul. He left 300 scudi to the Church of Santa Maria del Pianto. He named as his general heirs his male issue Francesco, Giovan Battista, Felice, Cristoforo and Angelo; the last was born on June 30, 1599, when the father was already imprisoned. He stipulated that the sons should provide dowries for their sisters Ersilia and Virginia. To his beloved wife Lodovica he left the dowry and the extradowers. He named as guardians for his sons Fabrizio Massimi, Tiberio Astalli,[1] Planca Coronati, his advocate, and Marcello Santacroce. The executors of the will were to be the Cardinals Caetani, Sforza, and San Giorgio.[2] On September 10th he appended a codicil adding his own wife to the list of trustees, providing a substitute for any one of these who might not accept, and making some small donations; among these, a large painting of St. Francis to his ancestral church.

Bernardo, on September 2d, first assigned 1,000 scudi to Cinzia, a girl then about six years old, whom his brother Rocco had had of a certain Artemisia who later married Cornelio, a miller. Bernardo destined this sum to her that she might marry or become a nun. Then on the 10th he dictated a brief testament in Tordinona. He too wished to be buried in San Tommaso. He made some legacies to certain churches such as Santa Maria in Vallicella, Santa Maria Maggiore, and Aracoeli; also to individuals, among whom were his nurse, Clemenzia, and a

[1] Dead on March 18, 1615.

[2] Dom. Stella acted as notary. Stella, like Coronati, survived the Cenci, whose friend and notary he had been, only a short time. He died on Feb. 22, 1600, at the age of 55.

prison warder. He ordered the payments of some debts to Braccio Baglioni, to Don Luca Lancellotti, etc. Finally, he instituted as his general heirs the sons of his brother Giacomo.

Lucrezia commended her own daughters to the care of her son-in-law, Tignosino, and rewarded the maidservant, Ortensia, for services rendered during her imprisonment.[1]

We now come to Beatrice's will, which has been accurately transcribed anew by the notary, Orazio Jacobino, from the volume in which it is preserved.[2]

"August 27th, 1599.

"I, Beatrice Cenci, daughter of Francesco Cenci, Roman, of happy memory, being of sane mind and wit and of sound body, and thinking that I am soon to die, in order that confusion may not arise after my death, do make this my last testament in the following manner and with my signature.

"And first I begin with my soul, which in all humility I commend to the Most Glorious Mother, to God, the Seraphic Father St. Francis, and all the Court of Heaven; and I will that my body be buried in the Church of San Pietro Montorio, to which church I bequeath for my burial 100 scudi of money, with the provision that out of these 100 scudi a stone be bought, and that the rest go to pay for my obsequies, and for alms to celebrate masses for my soul.

"Item: I leave as a legacy for my soul's good, and for every other good purpose, 3,000 scudi in money to the Church of San Pietro Montorio of Rome, that a wall may be built to retain the slope by which one mounts up to said Church, and for other things needful for the Church, and that every day for all time a mass be celebrated in

1 We have not found the will certainly made by Lucrezia, as she herself declared to the Brothers of St. John the Beheaded. She said she did not remember who was the notary, and Bertolotti (p. 149) gives no quotations of any sort.

2 It is in the library of the well-known Cavaliere Francesco Evaristo Gentili (Foro Traiano, 37, Rome). He has permitted us not only to copy it, but also to photograph it in its entirety. It was already published by Bertolotti, but with his customary carelessness.

the Capella Santa of said church for my soul. And I will that these 3,000 scudi be not spent without the knowledge and consent of the Reverend Father Fra' Andrea of Rome, my Confessor, who is to-day at San Pietro Montorio. And in the event that the Church above mentioned does not wish to accept this legacy with the above-mentioned provision, in that case I substitute in this legacy another holy place at the choice of said Father Fra' Andrea, with such conditions and provisions as shall to him seem good.

"Item: I bequeath as above to the Church of Aracoeli 100 scudi in money with the provision that those Fathers must celebrate three hundred masses for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to the Church of Santo Bartolomeo of Rome, on the Island, 50 scudi in money, that those fathers may celebrate 100 masses for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to the Church of Santo Francesco of Rome 100 scudi in money with an obligation to say 100 masses for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to the Nuns of Montecitorio who are of the order of St. Francis 50 scudi of money with the provision that they procure the celebration of 100 masses for my soul.

"Item: I leave to the nuns of Sta. Margherita della Scala of Rome 50 scudi of money with the aforementioned provision.

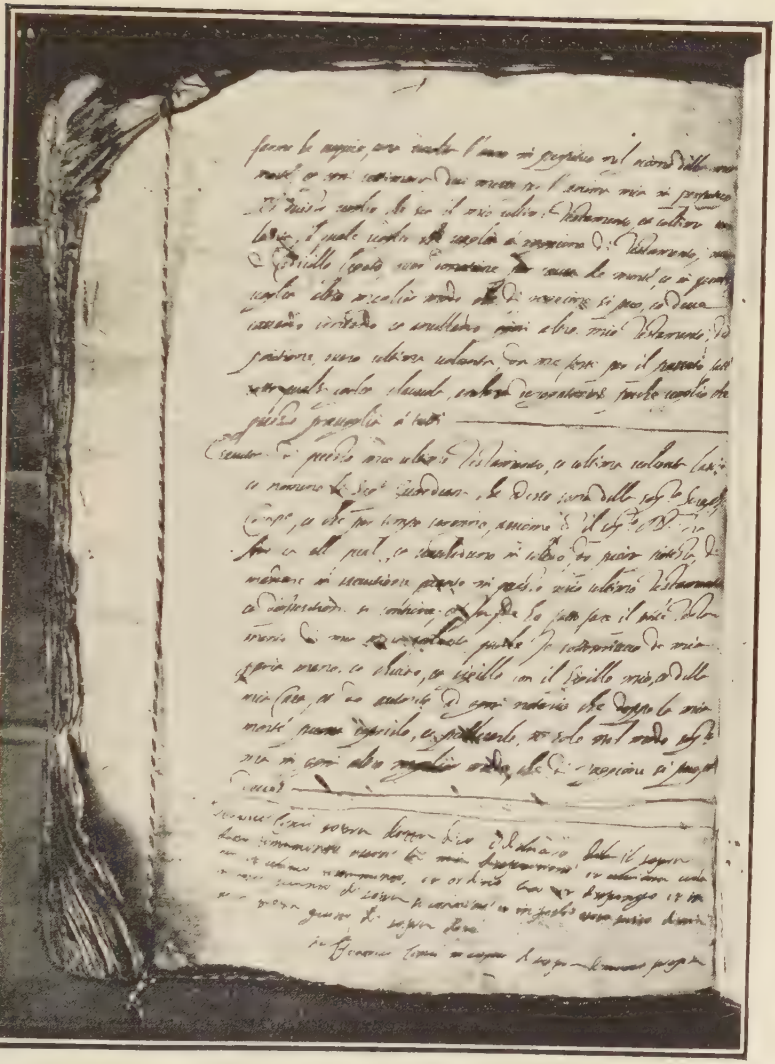
"Item: I leave as above to the Monastery of Sto. Belardino of Rome 50 scudi with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave as above to the Monastery delle Murate of Rome 50 scudi with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave as above to the Monastery of Sta. Apollonia in Trastevere 50 scudi with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave to the Church of the Capuchin Fathers of Rome 50 scudi of money with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave as above to the Monastery of the Capuchin nuns of Rome 50 scudi with the aforementioned provision.



Last Page of Beatrice Cenci's Testament, August 27, 1599
(With her seal and autograph)

"Item: I leave as above to the Monastery or House of Homeless Girls in Rome 100 scudi with provision that they have 200 masses celebrated for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to the Nuns of Casa Pia of Rome 100 scudi in money with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave to the Church of the Madonna delli Miracoli near the Piazza dell' Oca in Rome 50 scudi in money with the provision that those fathers say 100 masses for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to the Church of Santi Cosimo and Damiano in Rome in Campo Vaccino 50 scudi in money, with the provision that 100 masses be celebrated at the Privileged Altar in said church.

"Item: I leave as above to the Company of the Most Blessed Trinity of Rome 100 scudi in money, with the provision that 200 masses be celebrated for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to the Insane Hospital of Rome 50 scudi in money with the provision that 100 masses be celebrated for my soul.

"Item: I leave to the Hospital of the Brotherhood of Good Deeds of Rome 50 scudi in money with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave to the Church of Santo Paolo della Regola 50 scudi of money with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave as above to the Monastery of Orphan Girls at Santi Quattro Coronati, 50 scudi in money with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave as above to the Church of the Fathers Ministering to the Sick in Rome, 50 scudi with the aforementioned provision.

"Item: I leave as above to the poor prisoners of Rome 40 scudi, which 40 scudi is to be distributed among the four prisons of Rome by the Reverend Father Fra' Andrea aforesaid as shall to him seem best.

"Item: I leave as above to the Church of the Santi Apostoli of Rome 50 scudi with provision that 100 masses be celebrated for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above sufficient that ninety masses be celebrated for my soul in the Church of Santo Gregorio in Rome, and other fifty masses in the Church of Santo Lorenzo without the Walls; and to the other six of the seven ordinary churches sufficient for 50 masses in each of these churches at the Privileged Altars in said churches.

"Item: I leave as above sufficient that there may be celebrations for my soul in the Church of Santa Presede, and in the Church of Santa Potentiana, 100 masses in each of those churches at the Privileged Altars.

"Item: I leave as above to the Reverend Mother, Sister Ippolita, Nun in the Monastery of Monte Citorio, formerly my teacher, 300 scudi in money that she may pray God for my soul.

"Item: I leave to Lavinia, pupil of Sister Innocentia in the aforementioned Monastery 300 scudi in money as marriage portion, and that she may pray God for me; and if she would become a nun she may have the same legacy.

"Item: I leave as above for the love of God to Madonna Bastiana, widow, who has served me in my imprisonment, 200 scudi in money that she may pray God for my soul.

"Item: I leave as above to—N.—stepdaughter of Francesco Scotusio, solicitor, 200 scudi in money for dowry, that she may pray God for my soul.

"Item: I leave to Madonna Caterina de Santis, widow, who now is in the company of Signora Margherita Sorrocchi 300 scudi in money, which 300 scudi are to be put out at interest, and of this interest she shall do alms according to my intention expressed to her. And if this Madonna Caterina die, this legacy is to be transferred to others on this condition, that that person is still alive to whom said alms are to be given, according to my intention, as above. And if that person be dead, in that case I will that said Madonna Caterina may dispose of said legacy, both principal and interest, at her good will.

"Item: I leave to Carlo of Bertinoro 300 scudi in

money, of which I leave him a part through an obligation, and a part that he may pray God for my soul.

Item: I leave to Vittoria, daughter of Signor Domenico Stella [the Cenci's notary] 500 scudi in money, that she may pray God for my soul.[1]

"Item: I devise that the company to be named below as my heir shall first settle dowries as hereinafter set down for thirty poor girls of good condition, among whom I will that these be dowered, *videlicet;* Dionora, Ottavia, and Cecilia, daughters of the quondam Francesco de Santis, who are now in the house of Madonna Mattia, their sister at Li Mattei, and to them I leave 1,000 scudi in money for the three; to Francesca, Giulia, and Angela, daughters of Giovanni Ciccarello at La Regola I leave 100 scudi to each for dowry as above set forth. And further I leave for dowry as above to a girl to be nominated by the Reverend Father Fra' Andrea, aforesaid, according to my intention communicated to him, 200 scudi in money. And to these girls hereinbefore named, and to that one to be nominated as above, I will that the Company my heir shall forthwith deliver said dowries without other security. And these dowries are to be put out at interest by each one of the hereinbefore named and that one who is still to be nominated; and these interests shall accrue for said dowries; or else these girls named and to be nominated as above may use them for their needs, that is, the interests only, up to the time when they be wed. And if these girls named shall die without legitimate and natural issue, one girl shall succeed another; that is, if any among these sisters, or if the one to be nominated as above, shall die, then the next ones nominated shall succeed. And similarly if all the above-mentioned die without issue as above, in that case their nearest of kin shall succeed to these dowries, so that said Company will have no claim whatsoever upon these dowries. And to the other girls to the number of thirty I will that 100 scudi be given for each one, and the wed-

[1] The two concluding paragraphs are not in the notary's handwriting.

ding dress, as also for the others aforementioned. As for that one who shall be nominated by the aforesaid Father Fra' Andrea, as above, I will that he be enabled to send a girl in her place in the procession when the weddings shall be celebrated. And among these twenty-three who are to bring the number of girls up to thirty I will that these be included, viz.: Margherita, daughter of Virginia Battaglioni, near Santo Biagio del Anello, Margherita, daughter of Adriano Vanni, organist, and N., elder daughter of Maestra Silvio de Barberiis, Roman. And I will that the others up to the aforesaid number five be nominated by the Reverend Father Fra' Andrea aforementioned, and the others by the said Company; and these dowries, that is, these twenty-three shall be given according to the conditions imposed by the Company, and I will that by this marriage be understood one marriage only.

"To all my other property, real and personal, shares, and rights present and future and in whatsoever manner existing, and due to me in whatsoever manner by reason of paternal and maternal inheritance, by reason of dowry in whatsoever manner, and by any other reason relating or appertaining thereto, I do leave, institute and with my own mouth nominate as my residuary legatees the Seraphic Company of the Sacred Stigmata of the Seraphic Holy Father St. Francis of Rome; with the provision that said Company be obligated to put out at interest 8,000 scudi in security, with the fruits whereof it shall every year, on the day of the Feast of the Sacred Stigmata of St. Francis, processionally marry fifteen girls with a dowry of 30 scudi each and the wedding dress. And of these girls I will that said Father Fra' Andrea, my Confessor aforementioned, shall every year have the nomination of two. And these dowries shall be given in perpetuity, with the pacts and provisions that are commonly made by the aforesaid Company, that it may dispose both of the fruits of these 8,000 scudi and of the rest in the service of the Company according to its good judgment. And further I will that said Company be bounden

to perform my obsequies once a year in perpetuity on the day of my death; and to say each week in perpetuity two masses for my soul. And I will that this be my last will and testament, and I will that it have the validity of testament, or codicil, legacy, or donation on account of death, and for whatsoever other purpose it rightfully may, and it shall void, quash, and annul any other testament, disposition, or will of mine, perchance made by me in the past under whatsoever proviso, even though this infringe upon it, for I will that this have validity above everything.

"For executors of this my last will and testament I leave and name them who are now Lord Guardians of the aforesaid Seraphic Company, and them who will be its Guardians at any time, together with the aforesaid Reverend Father Fra' Andrea. And to them, and each one without restriction, I give full power to put in execution all that is contained in this my last testament and disposition; and in good faith and of my own free will I have had this present testament made, which I now subscribe with my own hand, and close and seal with my seal, and that of my family; and I grant full authority to every notary that after my death he may open it and publish it, not only in the aforesaid manner but in any other better manner, which is rightfully possible and due.

(A paragraph follows in Beatrice's own hand.)

"I, Beatrice Cenci aforesaid, say and declare the aforesaid testament to be my disposition and last will and last testament, and I order, leave, dispose and institute everything hereinbefore contained, and in good faith have I subscribed with my own hand all the foregoing.

"I, Beatrice Cenci, as above with my own hand."

The testament was completed with three seals of the Cenci—of which two remain—authenticated by the hand of the notary, Jacobino, and entrusted to his care in the presence of witnesses.

"I, Antonio Gatti, was present at the delivery of this present document.

"I, Fabrizio Galleni, was present as above.
"I, Fabrizio Palmiero, was present as above.
"I, D. Nicolò Piccio, was present as above.
"I, Calisto Pasqualone, was present as above.
"I, Frat. Andrea, of Rome, was present as above.
"I, Fra' Santo Romano, confirm as above."

On the following day Beatrice made a first codicil: "Die Sabbati 28 August, 1599: Illustris d. Beatrix Cincia filia bonae memoriae Francisci Cincij romani, sana Dei gratia corpore, sensu, mente et intellectu, asserens hodie consignasse mihi notario quodam folium clausum et eius sigillo sigillatum, et eius manu ut asseruit subscriptum intus, et quod declaravit fuisse, et esse suum ultimum Testamentum, suamque ultimam voluntatem prout in eo de quo, etc., quia mens humana est mutabilis, melius cogitando, hoc suum condidit codicillum tenoris infrascripti &."[1]

"First: Regarding the legacy which she avers having made in said testament to the Church of Santo Pietro Montorio in Rome, of 3,000 scudi to the purpose of erecting that wall on the hillside, and doing other things necessary for the Convent and Church, the codicil-maker substitutes and removes from this legacy 500 scudi of money, so that 2,500 scudi remain, which are to serve for the aforesaid purpose, and this money cannot be spent in that construction and for the other things aforementioned without the knowledge and express consent of the Rev. Father Fra' Andrea of Rome now living in that Convent, and her Father Confessor.

"Further the maker of this Codicil leaves and ordains that once a year in perpetuity obsequies are to be done

[1] Sunday, Aug. 28, 1599: The illustrious Lady Beatrice Cenci, daughter of Francesco Cenci, Roman, of happy memory, by God's grace sound of body, understanding, mind and wit, asserts that she to-day has delivered to me, a certain notary, a closed document sealed with her seal, and as she has averred, signed within with her hand. And this she has declared was and is her last will and testament But, etc., since the human mind is mutable, she has established this her codicil of the following tenor:

for her soul in that Church of San Pietro Montorio. And in the event that said Church or the Fathers who are now or at any time will be there may be unwilling to accept this legacy with the aforesaid provision, in that case the codicil-maker substitutes to receive this legacy another sacred edifice at the election of said Father Fra' Andrea, with what conditions shall to him seem best. Further, in reference to the portioning of thirty girls which is to be done this first year, with the dowries assigned as set forth in said testament, the codicil-maker leaves and ordains that to Signore Gregoria, Porzia, and Claudia, daughters of Signora Lucrezia Petronia de Cenci and of the late Felice de Vellis, to each of these be given one of said dowries of 100 scudi each, with this provision, however, that they be not obligated to go in procession with the others, but three girls may be sent in their place, wearing the wedding garments which will be delivered to them.

"Further, the maker of this Codicil leaves as a legacy or in any better manner to Madonna Agata, wife of Marino, the Frenchman, tailor at La Scrofa, for the love of God and that she may pray God for her soul, 100 scudi of money which are to be put out at interest in her favour. And she may not dispose of this interest or principal save with the willingness and express consent of the aforesaid Rev. Father Fra' Andrea. And the aforesaid Rev. Father should be the arbiter, and if she does not observe the conditions communicated by the maker of this Codicil, as she asserts to this Father Fra' Andrea, he may transfer said legacy to another pious work as shall seem best to him.

"Further, said codicil-maker as above leaves to Madonna Mattia, sister of the aforesaid Madonna Agata, and wife of Luca Scosiano (?), baker, other 50 scudi of money, with the pacts and conditions and other things contained in the aforesaid legacy made to the aforesaid Madonna Agata, and in no other manner.

"Further, the maker of this Codicil leaves as above to [lacuna in original] widow, who dwells near the Capitol, other 50 scudi of money, with the pacts, conditions, and

other things contained in the aforesaid legacy made to Madonna Agata as above, and no otherwise."

The notary's declaration follows, concerning Beatrice's wishes in regard to the codicil and testament, *actum Romae in Regione Arenulae et Carceribus Curiae de Sabellis*,[1] wherein she was at the time. The document was witnessed by the same men who had been present the day before at the delivery of the will; that is, Fra' Andrea and Fra' Santi, Romans, of the Order of St. Francis of the Observance, the priest Nicolò Piccio, Calisto Pasqualone, Fabrizio Palmeri, Fabrizio Galleni, Florentine, and Antonio Gatti. These persons were in all probability attached to the prisons of Corte Savella.

We shall see, later, the other and more important codicil of September 8th. For the present let us examine that of August 28th and the will itself.

It deals with about 20,000 scudi left by Beatrice to some thirty churches, convents, Companies, hospitals, prisons, and individuals, for charities or to provide for the saying of three thousand masses and an infinity of prayers. Among these churches was San Bartolomeo on the Island, near which her brother Cristoforo was slain; and Santa Croce dei Capuccini, whither she had brought Vittoria to see her mother. Among the monasteries was Montecitorio, where she had gone to school as a girl. Among the individuals were Sister Ippolita, her former teacher, Carlo of Bertinoro, who had aided her when in prison to keep in touch with the outside world and had lent her money, and the widow, Bastiana, who had served her in Corte Savella. Some legacies have thus a connection with Beatrice's life and memories; but many others spring from the counsels of her confessor, Fra' Andrea Belmonte, who lived in that very San Pietro Montorio which she benefited more than any other place, assigning a considerable sum "that a wall may be built to retain the slope by which one mounts up to said church." There among the trees of the Gianicolo, in the silent nave, be-

[1] Given in Rome in the Arenula quarter and in the cells of Corte Savella.

fore Raphael's *Transfiguration*, she wished her requiem to be sung and her grave to be made; not in San Tommaso dei Cenci, near that palace wherein her tragic life began.

Fra' Andrea of Rome was to elect another legatee at his own option in case the Monastery of San Pietro in Montorio could not or would not accept the legacy and its conditions; Fra' Andrea was to distribute as he thought best the forty scudi to the four prisons of Rome; Fra' Andrea was to superintend the delivery or other disposition of the dowries to the girls. He had "full power to put into execution all that was contained in the testament."

Tignosino accomplished his purpose, which was that Beatrice should designate in the codicil a sum of money to the daughters of Lucrezia Petronia, who were kin to him. On the contrary, the daughters of Cesare and Giustiniana Cenci were excluded, although an abstract was prepared which ran in part as follows: "As she has forgotten a pious legacy for her soul's good which she has always had in mind to make, and to-day more than ever, she declares wills and disposes that at all costs her possessions should be given to the daughters of her stepmother, Signora Lucrezia Petronia, in precedence to the other legatees. Further, even though legacies are first made to other sacred foundations, churches, or hospitals, 2,000 scudi of money shall be given, and may be seised for them by proper authority, to each of the daughters of Giustiniana Amatuzzi de' Cenci who are not married nor have entered convents. And this money can be put at interest for them, that they make use of it as an augmentation of their portions when they are married or enter convents." It continues with the words: "I beg them to be content to pray often for my soul as they have constantly done, and so do I will, devise, and bequeath, as best I can . . . this being my last will."

We do not know why these dispositions, thus drafted, were not transcribed, with regard to Giustiniana's daughters, into the will and codicils. We know only that they

were not accepted by Beatrice. Perhaps there was bad blood between Beatrice and Giustiniana, extending to the latter's daughters. The girls in fact never appear in the pages of this history,[1] perhaps because they were shy of intimacy with a kinswoman accused of having plotted the death of her father and associated in an intrigue with a base assassin. The feeling was justified, but none the less it should at least have kept them from seeking or expecting benefactions from the person they condemned.

But we must linger especially upon two points of particular interest in Beatrice's dispositions.

"I leave for dowry," reads the will, "to a girl to be nominated by the Reverend Father Fra' Andrea, *according to my intention communicated to him*, 200 scudi of money." As has been seen, Fra' Andrea may freely chose other girls, but this one is separately indicated, according to a special "intention." And Beatrice continues: "I will that Fra' Andrea be enabled to send a girl in her place when the weddings shall be celebrated." How can one fail to think of Vittoria, Olimpio's daughter?

And not without emotion does one read another passage of the testament!

There was a deep intimacy between Beatrice and a Madonna Caterina de Santis, widow of Francesco de Santis; Beatrice left a thousand scudi to her daughters, Dionora, Ottavia, and Cecilia. The girls were living with a sister, Mattia; the mother on the other hand dwelt with Margherita Sarrocchi Birago,[2] a poetess, who was born

[1] Giustiniana in fact is once recorded, but merely because, on hearing that the Royal Court was instituting a trial at La Petrella, she crossed herself!

[2] Antonio Favaro: Amici e corrispondenti di Galileo Galilei. I. Margherita Sarrocchi. In the Atti del R. Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, series VII, vol. V (Venice, 1894), pp. 555-572. See also Jani Nicii Erithraei (Gianvittorio de' Rossi), Pinacotheca imaginum illustrium doctrinae vel ingenii laude virorum (Cologne, 1645), pp. 259-261; Torquato Tasso: Opere (Pisa, 1822), vol. VI; Rime, Part II, pp. 17 and 20; Aldo Manuzio; Lettere famigliari (Rome, 1592), chaps. 26, 46, and 126; Capacius: Illustrium mulierum Elogia (Naples, 1602), chap. 9; Tomm. Stigliani, Canzoniere, lib. VIII, 9; Bertolotti, 142, etc.

in Naples, but at the time had settled in Rome. She was a person of some fame in her time. A friend of Tasso and Galileo, she was gallantly hymned by some, among them Aldo Manuzio, and bitterly abused by others, among them the Cavaliere Marino. She was jealous in her own love affairs, indulgent in those of others; it was vilely said of her that she was *inter mulieres vir, inter viros mulier.* Her poem, "Scanderbeide," brought her at her death, on October 29, 1617, the honour of being "borne to the tomb in the Church of La Minerva, crowned with laurel, and favoured with musical accompaniments by virtuosi and with many original musical compositions played about her bier." [1]

Beatrice, then, says in her testament: "I leave to Madonna Caterina de Santis, widow, who now is in the company of Signora Margherita Sarrocchi, 300 scudi in money, which 300 scudi are to be put out at interest, and of this interest she shall do alms *according to my intention expressed to her.* And if this Madonna Caterina die, the legacy is to be transferred to others on this condition, that *that person* is still alive to whom said alms are to be given, *according to my intention,* as above. And if that person be dead, in that case I will that said Madonna Caterina may dispose of said legacy, both principal and interest, at her good will."

We may immediately dismiss the possibility that the paragraph treats of a beneficiary to be freely chosen by Caterina de Santis. Not only does Beatrice speak of "her intention expressed" to her friend, but by the words "that person" she points to a definite individual, though she leaves the name unspoken. She also adds that if "that person" be dead at the time the interests are returned on the money, Caterina may dispose of the legacy, not for any similar charitable purpose, but "at her good will."

But the words of the testament assume a singular value, when one reads those which Beatrice dictated for her second codicil, three days before she was beheaded, at a time

[1] Orbaan: Documenti sul Barocco, p. 291.

when every hope of mercy had failed, and when her conscience was faced only by the terrible verity of Death.

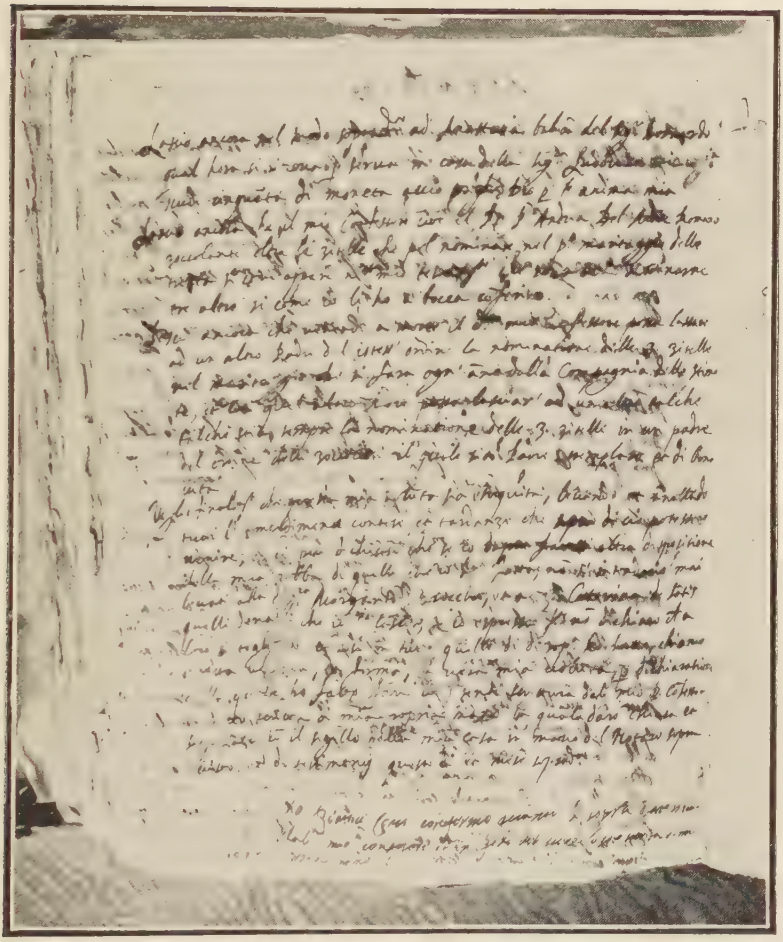
At a given point her words take the character of a painful confession, and "that person" becomes an "unhappy boy";[1] he becomes her own baby, the natural issue of her relations with Olimpio. As the baby was born of the guilt of a married man, who had become, at her instigation, the assassin of her own father, she could not dream of naming the child an heir; nor could she even freely name him or do him too open favour. The shamed and wretched mother entrusted him in dying to the pitiful hearts of Caterina de Santis and Margherita Sarrocchi.

"I, Beatrice Cenci, after my testament and codicil given into the hand of Jacobino, do declare in this other codicil my final will; which is, that I withdraw 1.000 scudi from those 8,000 which I am leaving to the Company of the Stigmata of St. Francis, which are to be put out at interest to dower fifteen girls. I thus withdraw the obligation to wed fifteen, but leave only that they are to wed thirteen each year; without, however, any prejudice to those two whom my Confessor is to choose each year; on the contrary I devise that he may elect every year three.

"I leave by reason of legacy or by other better means 50 scudi of money to Signora Margherita Sarrocchi Birago, that she may pray God for my soul. She may, however, enjoy the interests, but may not withdraw the principal sum. And if this lady come to die the principal sum shall fall to Madonna Caterina de Santis, widow, or else to others nominated by Madonna Caterina with the obligation which I shall tell below.

"I leave in the same manner to Madonna Caterina de Santis, widow, who is now in the company of said Signora Margherita, other 500 scudi of money with obligation to put them to interest in a secure place and to spend the fruits for alms; that is, to sustain an unhappy boy as ward, as I have directed by word of mouth; and while this boy shall live she shall be always obliged to sustain him

[1] "Povero fanciullo."



Second Page of Codicil, September 8, 1599

with the interests; and if Signora Margherita come to die she shall still be bounden to expend the interests of those 500 scudi on the same charitable work. And if Madonna Caterina die before this boy, she must leave all the sum of that money to other persons with the aforesaid obligation; but if the boy die before her, the money shall revert to her. And in case Signora Margherita and Madonna Caterina should die, and the boy be at the age of twenty years, this boy shall then be nominated by Madonna Caterina free master as well of the interests as of the principal sum, with obligation to pray for my soul.

"I leave also in the aforesaid manner to Anastasia, nurse of Signor Bernardo, who is now a servant in the house of my kinswoman, Signora Lodovica, 50 scudi of money that she may pray God for my soul.

"I also devise that my Confessor, the Rev. Father Andrea Belmonte, Franciscan of Rome, may name three other maidens also in addition to those which he may nominate in the first dowering of the thirty, as appears in my testament. And this is as I have told him by word of mouth.

"I devise further that if my Confessor come to die he may leave to another father of the same order the nomination of the three girls in the marriages which shall be celebrated every year by the Company of the Stigmata, and thus that other father may leave the charge to another, so that the nomination of the three girls shall always reside in a father of the Franciscan order, the said father to be exemplary and of good life.

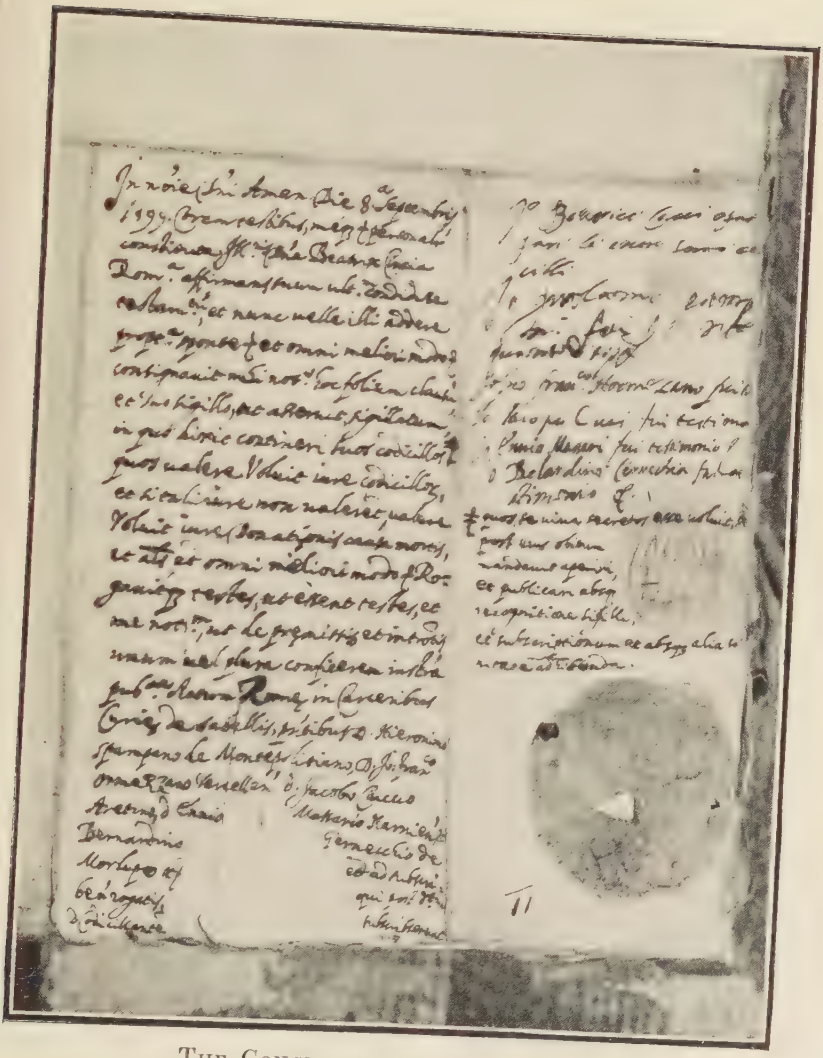
"I will finally that this my will be executed, with the removal and annulment of all impediments, contests, and delays which may be counter to it; and further I declare that if later I should make another disposition of my property than that which I have now made, that money which I leave to Margherita Sarrocchi and to Madonna Caterina de Santis shall never be understood to be alienated from them, saving that I expressly declare that it be taken from them. And thus in all that I have done above, I name this my last, firm, and true will, in declara-

tion of which I have had this present writing made by my Father Confessor and subscribed it with my own hand; and I shall now give it, closed and sealed with the seal of my house, into the hand of the aforesaid notary and of the witnesses on this day and month aforesaid.

(In her own hand) "I, Beatrice Cenci, confirm all I have said above or caused to be written by my Confessor, and in faith of its truth I have subscribed with my own hand."

Has the notary here, in a marginal note, preserved for us some memory of poor Beatrice's grievous aspect, her gestures, her anguish, while these poignant words were being written down and the tragic signature appended. Far from it! Whether he was actuated by a false respect for the dead, or bitten by some wretched scruple, or overawed in his professional duty by those who did not choose the existence of this boy should be known of men, it is now idle to ask. In any case, the codicil was kept hidden. Thus, while the testament and the first codicil were opened and read on Sept. 13, 1599, or two days after her death, and were immediately made public,[1] this second codicil was unknown for a good thirty-five years. It was not opened until Messer Giulio Lancione di Forli, Civil Solicitor of the Venerable Foundation of St. Peter's, who had got wind of it in August, 1634, first asked a copy of that part of the journal of the Company of St. John the Beheaded relative to Beatrice's last hours. He received the copy on August 20th, from the Governor of the Company, Messer Matteo Moretti. Then on the 26th he brought to the notice of the notary, Cesare Colonna, that among his documents lay a closed and sealed folio consigned there on Sept. 8, 1599, by Beatrice Cenci! The document was nevertheless not known to students until

[1] *Avviso* to Urbino: "The girl has made a will for 15,000 scudi, leaving 3,000 to San Pietro Montorio and many other hundreds to other sacred foundations, and the rest, which will be about eight or nine thousand scudi she leaves to the Company of the Stigmata as residuary. This property is in the Kingdom of Naples."



THE CONCLUSION OF THE CODICIL

1877.[1] All who still clung to the romance, the legend consecrated by poetry, who held Beatrice an "angel of purity," an "unhappy virgin," a "divine maiden," a "saintly girl," a "most pure damsel,"[2] all these insisted on seeing in her benefaction only a kindness toward some protégé. Others who held no such exalted opinion of Beatrice since history had begun to reveal the nature of her relations with Olimpio, were hesitant; especially since they saw the name: Jacopo Cenci, in the list of witnesses to the codicil. Nor were they persuaded, when others pointed out that it was "a certain error to believe that since Giacomo figures among the witnesses to the delivery of the codicil . . . he must also have known of its contents!"[3] Aside from the fact that Giacomo Cenci was certainly cognisant of everything, the real error consists in reading *Jacopo Cenci*, where the document most clearly shows *Jacopo Ciuci*, or Ciucci,[4] and in forgetting that Beatrice Cenci made this codicil in the prisons of Corte Savella, while Giacomo, under close guard, was preparing for death in the distant dungeons of Tordinona![5]

The documents are clear. In other bequests Beatrice extends her charity to an infinite number of foundations and persons. Here we find her no longer aiding a troop of poor children, but designating one "unhappy boy." In other cases she assigns the interests of her beneficiaries to religious and confraternities. In this single provision she takes one boy, and one only, and entrusts

[1] Bertolotti: Francesco Cenci e la sua famiglia, extract from the Rivista Europea (Florence, 1877), pp. 66-67. Instead of Sept. 8, 1599, Bertolotti sets down February 8!

[2] We have gleaned these few phrases from the old tales, from the novels, tragedies, etc. Any one who wished to waste the time could make a considerably richer harvest.

[3] Rod. Maiocchi: La pretesa illibatezza di Beatrice Cenci, in the Rivista di Scienze storiche, Year VII (Pavia, 1910) pp. 269-276.

[4] There were other *Ciuci* or *Ciucci* at the time in Rome. See, for example, in the Archives of the State of Rome the rubrics of the Acts of the notary Belgio.

[5] The other witnesses to the delivery of the codicil were Girolamo Spampano, Gio. Francesco Hormezano, Ennio Massari, and Belardino Cernechia.

him to two women to whom alone she reveals his name, concealing it even from her notary. And this should be noted: there is no question here of a charity toward some poor boy, who at his coming of age is to fend for himself, as is commonly the provision for orphans; the sum is to be reserved for him for his whole life and is to be "put out at interest in a secure place"; and if the boy should die before Caterina de Santis, that sum is not to pass to another poor boy, but is merely to remain hers. And how can one suppose that Beatrice, two weeks after she had made her will, and in the last dreadful days of her existence, should desire to make a new codicil, which, though indeed it changed other provisions, did so almost with the sole purpose of increasing the three hundred scudi to eight hundred, and of settling that this money should be understood as "inalienable," if not impelled by a pity which had the urgency of passion, the passion of a mother for her child?

This inward torment for the son who had ripened in her bosom and at the moment was crying for her, far away, this last thought for his shadowed future, this *humanity* of hers rising clear of personal tragedy to redeem her with the purity of mother-love, is not all this far nobler, greater, and more pitiful than the witless infatuation of her panegyrists, or the frigid cruelties of those who slander her name?

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SCAFFOLD

On June 15, 1599, while the Cenci were on trial for the murder of their father, Marcantonio Massimi went to the scaffold "with the holy benediction" of Clement VIII for having poisoned his brother Luca in an attempt to obtain the rights of primogeniture. Clement VIII had been inexorable in demanding the death of the guilty man.

On August 7th an *avviso* to the Court of Urbino announced that Andrea Caproni had been seized, in the household of Duke Cesarini, "for having dealt certain wounds to a brother of his own." It added: "These young men are imitating the sons of Francesco Cenci!"

Finally, on September 6th news came from Subiaco that on the previous day Paolo Santacroce had slain his mother, after having vilely slandered her, because he had not succeeded in persuading her to name him her heir. The "director" noted: "It is the common thought that this crime will do no good to the Cenci case!"

The popular instinct was right; by strengthening Clement's decision to deal severely with murder, this last crime precipitated the end of the Cenci.

Until September 10th the accused, though expecting the worst, had no definite knowledge of their fate. The "Record of Victuals Supplied" still details the meals of two women. This was Beatrice's supper: fish, *tarantello*, claret, fruit in snow, eggs *en casserole*, bread and salad.

A little after she had finished her meal the sentence was brought, to Corte Savella as well as to Tordinona, by Cristoforo, the Pope's courier. It is impossible even to-day to read the dreadful document without emotion.[1]

[1] Reproduced by Spezi, pp. 297-299, by Bertolotti, pp. 427-432, etc.

The sentence, signed naturally by Moscato,[1] is countersigned by the notary Girolamo Mazziotto and the Substitute, Biagio Cappello, the one who was sent to Rieti and to Cantalice for the "examination" of the spot where Olimpio died.

The sentence contains not a word of commiseration for the condemned, nor even a word of reprobation for Francesco Cenci. Francesco, through his family's guilt, was a "most wretched father" [2] and a "most unhappy husband"; [3] but apparently the sons suffered no attaint from such a father, nor did the wife from such a husband. Their punishment was necessary that they might not boast of the monstrous crime they had committed, and that their end might serve as a terrible example to any who might have a mind to perpetrate similar crimes.[4]

Giacomo Cenci was to be carried through Rome on a cart as far as the place of punishment; his flesh was then to be torn with red-hot pincers. On coming to the block, the executioner would beat him on the head with a mallet until he should die, and his soul "be separated from the body"; [5] he should then be cut in pieces and these pieces hung on hooks. In the case of Beatrice and Lucrezia, their heads should be struck from their shoulders. Finally, Bernardo's life should be spared, "*justis de causis animum nostrum moventibus mitius secum agendo.*" [6] But he too was to be transported on the cart to the same place, and was to be present at the execution of his step-

[1] "Ita pronuntiavi ego Ulixis Muscatus locumtenens et judex deputatus."

[2] "Miserrimum patrem."

[3] "Infelicissimum maritum."

[4] An *avviso* of September 18th said: "Some parricidal influence must be running this year, for they say that two brothers Velletrani have likewise been brought to the Capitol imputed with having slain their father and then buried him in a vineyard, where he was unearthed by some dogs. And they say that the case will soon be brought to proof, and, God help us, we are at the end of the world, for these truly are things contrary to all duty and against nature itself."

[5] "A corpore separetur."

[6] For just reasons which stir our spirit to gentler treatment of him.

mother, his sister, and his brother. He was then to be returned to prison, was to remain confined for a year in close custody, or was to be sent to some other place at the pleasure of the Pope, and then was to be sent to row in the galleys forever, *ut vita sit illi supplitium et mors solatium!*" [1]

On September 9th, or two days before the execution, Don. Jacobo Gigli, substitute of San Lorenzo in Damaso, had surrendered a copy of Bernardo's baptismal certificate; he was born on Aug. 15, 1581, and was baptised two days later. This action was perhaps performed at the request of the advocates. In fact an *avviso* of the previous day stated: "The doctors in the defence hold it certain they will save Bernardo, the youngest son, on account of his tender age." Indeed, we find in the *fascicoli Cenci-Bolognetti*, a petition on behalf of Bernardo, signed *Coronatus Planca de Coronatis, Rutilius Alterius, Prosper Farinacius, advocati.* The plea is based on the boy's minority.

Giacomo, Bernardo, Beatrice, and Lucrezia were besides condemned to the confiscation of all their property, real and personal estate, rights and shares, memberships, offices, benefices, pledges, domains, jurisdictions, fiefs, in whatever quarter existing and in whatever manner acquired and possessed by them. The whole was to pass to the Civil Government and to the Apostolic Camera. Ulisse Moscato, in the name of the Holy Father, concludes with a phalanx of words: "dicimus, pronunciamus, sententiamus, decernimus, declaramus, condemnamus, applicamus, adimus, auferimus, infiscamus, incorporamus," that sounds like the roll-call of some band of bravoes launched for the extermination of the house of Cenci.

Giacomo must have sorely envied the fate of his brother Paolo, dead in his bed while still a boy; even that of Rocco and Cristoforo, whose souls had been swiftly sped to eternity by an adversary's steel! Ah, had he himself only died at the age of nine, when a dread illness menaced his life, and when he was only saved by "the great prayers

[1] That life may be a torment and death a solace.

which they had had the Capuchin Fathers make!" Why had God given ear to these prayers? Why had He not summoned the boy, still innocent, still untortured? [1]

A very great number of copies or paraphrases of one single "Relation" of the death of the Cenci exist in public libraries and archives, and in private ones also. We have examined some fifty of these; our examination has revealed a common derivation in them, even in those which are not identical. They include the same errors, often identical phrases and periods, and sometimes identical pages.

Some have chosen to maintain that this recital, the progenitor of so great a family, goes no farther back than the middle of the 17th century; [2] while others believe it to be a contemporary one written "in those very times, even a few days after the last punishment of the Cenci family." [3]

We shall set down in another place our reasons for holding that the story was written about a quarter of a century after the tragedy. In any case, whether written at the time or later, it is impossible to set any store upon it, so greatly does it abound in errors and falsehoods, many of them grotesque. The anonymous author, the precursor and source of the romancers of the eighteenth century, writes that Francesco built the ancestral church of San Tommaso and that he sent his sons to Salamanca to study; that his wife Lucrezia was very rich, and that she gave him seven children; that one of his daughters espoused a Count Gabrielli di Gubbio; [4] that Rocco Cenci was killed by a man named Norcino after his father's death, and that Cristoforo was slain during mass, when he was in the country; that a love-intrigue existed be-

[1] Giacomo had been close to death in July and August, 1590.

[2] Bertolotti, p. 299.

[3] Carlo Merkel: *Due leggende intorno a Beatrice Cenci ed a Casa Borghese*, in the *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, XII (Turin-Palermo, 1893), p. 363.

[4] It was a Faustina Cenci of another branch, sister of a Girolamo, who married Count Carlo Gabrielli di Gubbio. She was still living in 1609. See Van de Vivere, 115.

tween Beatrice and Monsignore Guerra, and that he had a share in the murder of Francesco Cenci; that Francesco was a septuagenarian at his death, while in fact he was but forty-nine; that the assassins were reluctant to murder him because he was a poor old man; that it was Lucrezia who gave him the drug, and that it was the women who threw him from the balcony; that the murderers, when captured, were brought to Naples; that Olimpio was murdered at Terni; that Guerra made his escape in the disguise of a charcoal-burner; that Beatrice, during her torture, was suspended by her hair, and that she never confessed; that the four accused, when respited, held a gay banquet together; that Farinaccio spoke to the Pope for four hours in succession; that Ulisse Moscato was dismissed from the judiciary, half way through the trial, for fear that he would fall in love with Beatrice; that the sentence was not delivered by Moscato, but by Monsignore Ferdinando Taverna, Governor of Rome; that when Beatrice heard the death-sentence, she made speeches of much literary grace, which the anonymous author reproduces; that after dressing herself with much difficulty, and uttering cries of despair, she summoned the notary and made her will; that afterwards she commanded garments "cut low and without shoulders," with broad sleeves, of coarse black cotton for Lucrezia, and of grey taffeta for herself; that Beatrice dressed herself as for a great "reception," donning "a gown of silver and a petticoat of purple silk, with high white slippers and crimson rosettes and lace"; that pardon was brought to Bernardo when he was on the scaffold; that Lucrezia did not succeed in disposing herself on the headsman's block on account of the fulness of her breasts; that Beatrice talked at length from the fatal scaffold; that at her death she was but sixteen years old. The author tells an infinity of such childish falsehoods, which are largely responsible for filling the story of the Cenci with a confusion, though which truth can only be attained at the price of abandoning the equivocal tale utterly and once for all.

Fortunately we possess a very different document con-

cerning the last hours of the Cenci. This is the record in the "Journals of the Company of St. John the Beheaded of the Florentine Nation in Rome.[1] It was written two or three days after the execution by a member, Santi Vannini, who had been with the condemned in prison, had stood by the block and witnessed their agony and dreadful death.

"Friday, the tenth [of September, 1599]: At the second hour of night [8.30 P. M.] information was given that on the following morning justice would be executed upon certain culprits in the prisons of Tordinona and Corte Savella; and therefore at the fifth hour of night [11.30 P. M.] the Comforters, the Chaplain, the Sacristan and the steward gathering there betook themselves to the cells of Tordinona, and made the customary prayers. And the following condemned to death were delivered over, *videlicet:*

"Sr. Giacomo Cenci and Sr. Bernardo Cenci, sons of the late Sr. Francesco Cenci.

"The said Sr. Giacomo after being exhorted and persuaded to patience, and having confessed to our chaplain, avowed himself disposed and resolute to die well, and as a true Christian. And he said he received this death in satisfaction and penance for his sins, and he asked pardon of all those who had been in any manner whatsoever offended by him, and he pardoned for God's love all who might have trespassed against him, and he besought the Company to pray God for his soul. . . .

"He said that there remained a sealed memorandum in the hand of the Most Reverend General of the Jesuits, in which it was stated that Mons. Luzio Savelli should restore 20,000 [scudi] and interests for the dowry of Sig-

[1] This record was first published, with some errors, by Guerrazzi in his *Prefazione alla Beatrice Cenci con documenti inediti* (Milan, 1864); it later appeared in several editions of his novel. As we have seen, a copy of some sentences relative to Beatrice, was permitted to Matteo Moretti on Aug. 20, 1634, or when her codicil of Sept. 8, 1599, was being sought. The sentences were those three which concern Beatrice's delivery to the Company with Lucrezia, and their decapitation and burial. See also Bertolotti, p. 135; Rinieri, p. 315; Rodâni, pp. 28-29, etc.

nora Antonina Cenci, the deponent's sister, who had been wife of Sr. Luzio. And he gave this information for the benefit of creditors, and for the benefit of others whom it might concern that so they might avail themselves of it.

"For the rest he said that he had made a testament, to which he referred in everything and for everything, and again he confirmed his words.

"Item: He said that as to the pledge of the 13,000 scudi made by the agency of Vola or another notary in favour of . . .[1] for a payment, in which it is stated that his father was indebted to Sr. Marzio Colonna to the sum of 13,000 scudi, the truth is that this instrument was falsely drawn, and is not true, but was made in collusion with that Sr. Marzio . . . and he said that he made this declaration and notification for the easing of his conscience.

"Item: He said that he had had a ring from Messer. Troiano Turchetti of a value of 9 scudi and 10 soldi, and desired that this man be given satisfaction, and so ordered.

"He prayed also his heirs and those whom it concerned that they would pay all his debts for the easing of his conscience.

"The aforesaid Signor Bernardo likewise being persuaded to contrition and having confessed said the same words, and asked pardon in everything as above, and for the rest he referred to his testament which likewise he ratified and confirmed.

"At about the tenth hour [4.30 A. M.] mass was celebrated by our chaplain, and said Signori Giacomo and Bernardo received the Holy Sacrament with much devotion.

"Afterwards said Signori Giacomo and Bernardo said that they had heard that in the complaint or trial for homicide committed on the person of the late Signor Rocco their brother, Emilio Bartolini alias Marangone was imputed or named; they granted to him peace, and

[1] Lacuna in the ms.; it should be filled with "Mons. Francisco Martinez."

consented to the cessation of that complaint or trial as far as any interest of their own was concerned, and they desired that our Company should publicly attest this fact whenever need might be; and they said that they did all this for the love of God, and they desired that this pacification be complete and all-inclusive, in the manner that they had given it to Paolo Bruno and Amilcare.

"Later came to the cells Signore Tranquillo . . .[1] substitute for the General Prosecutor; and he brought word to Signor Bernardo that His Holiness had spared his life, but yet that he was bounden to be conducted to the Bridge there to be present at the death of Signor Giacomo and the others.

"In these cells in Tordinona were present Mons. Gio. Aldobrandini, Mons. Aurelio del Migliore and Messer Camillo Moretti, Comforter, Messer Franco Vai[2] and Messer Migliore Guidotti; these last two were called in addition; also Domenico Sogliani, sacristan, and our chaplain.[3]

"At the same hour some of the Comforters went to the Corte Savella; and when they had entered into our chapel and made the customary prayers, the women here mentioned, condemned to death, were delivered to them, *videlicet:*

"Signora Beatrice Cenci, daughter of the late Francesco Cenci; and Signora Lucrezia Petronia, wife of the late Francesco Cenci, Roman gentlewomen.

"The aforesaid Signora Lucrezia being exhorted by the comforters to patience, and to resign herself to God's will, made her dispositions with much contrition. Having confessed to our chaplain, she said she wished to die as a good Christian and in the bosom of Holy Mother Church, asked pardon of God for her sins, and further asked pardon of those whom she had offended in any manner what-

[1] Lacuna to be filled in with "Ambrosini."

[2] Sebastiani in his notes to De Angelis, p. 199, says that Messer Francesco Vai died on April 20, 1601.

[3] All Florentines, as has been said, for "Only those of the Florentine Nation may enter this confraternity." Carlo Bartolomeo Piazza: *Opere Pie di Roma* (Rome, 1679), p. 504.

soever, as also she pardoned those who might have trespassed against her; and she said that she did all this with all her heart. And as for her possessions she said she had made a testament, but by the hand of what notary she did not remember. And she wished this will to be binding and therefore again confirmed it. And because in that testament she had made no mention of the 500 scudi of money promised to her daughter, Signora Olimpia,[1] she now declared and willed that an annual payment be made after the death of Signor Tiberio,[2] her kinsman, in conformity with the memorandum she had made and which she thought was in the hands of said Signor Tiberio. And she wished an appraisal of these 500 scudi to be made after the death of Signor Tiberio as was set forth in the memorandum, or as her children should agree.

"Item: She said that in said testament she had not nominated Ottavio Tignosino, her son-in-law, and she willed that he should be named guardian and trustee together with the others named in the testament.

"Item: She willed that the servant, Costanza, who had served her in the prison, in case her labours should not be rewarded by the court, which had given her to Signora Lucrezia, nor by the kinsmen of Signora Beatrice Cenci nor by others, should be rewarded out of Signora Lucrezia's possessions in some fitting manner.

"Item: She said she desired that representations should be made to the executors or guardians of the will of Francesco Cenci, and to Signor Bernardo Cenci if God should grant him life, that her husband Francesco Cenci's charity to her three daughters, Gregoria, Porzia, and Claudia, be carried out; for such was her will; and it was her belief that the sum was three thousand scudi with the past interest uncollected.

"And as for her burial she put herself utterly in the hands of her brother, Signor Lelio, whom she prayed to do good for her soul.

"Signora Beatrice also being exhorted to cast her-

1 Wife of Ottavio Tignosino.
2 Tiberio Velli died later on Aug. 3, 1610.

self on the bosom of the Lord, and having confessed to our chaplain, said she was content to die as a true Christian and confided herself in all to His Holy will and asked pardon of God for her sins, as also she asked pardon from those whom she had offended and granted pardon to them who had trespassed against her. And as for her possessions she spoke as follows: that she willed that her testament already entered in the acts of the notary of the holy Stigmata be entirely executed; and that His Holiness be besought by God's love to do her the mercy that said testament be made effective, and to be content that she should have the power to bequeath her dowry of 20,000 scudi, so that her purpose of aiding those Holy Establishments to which she left her property should not be defrauded.

"Item: She prayed the Company of Mercy to have 200 masses said for her soul, a part before she should be interred and the remainder later, for which purpose she assigned to our Overseer 45 giuli in cash, and she prayed the Illustrious Auditor of the Camera to be pleased to give the remainder to said Company that it might execute her wish. And a word might be said to Mons. Francesco Scotusio, her solicitor, to see if money of ours might be in his hands, and it should be given to them for this purpose.

"She also willed that Madonna Bastiana be paid, who had served her in her imprisonment in the cells with much charity; and she willed that besides her ordinary payment forty scudi of money be paid to her, in addition to that which was left her in the testament, and all this was left to her for the love of God; and if her ordinary payment were paid to her by the Court or others, she should not be paid that sum, but should be paid the balance.

"Item: She willed that to Andrea, Lodovico and Ascano, soldiers of the Castello, be paid conformably with custom, whatever was commonly given for like services done to those who were in a room in the Castello as she had been; and therefore she prayed and desired that they be paid.

"Item: She willed that payment from her moneys be made to Messer Carlo of Bertinoro, soldier of the Castello, who had lent eighty scudi of money to Signor Giacomo, her brother, and to herself, should he not be satisfied by said Signor Giacomo.

"Item: She desired also that the labours of madonna Costanza be recompensed, who had served her stepmother, Signora Lucrezia, in the prison, in case she should not be satisfied by the Court.

"As for her sepulchre she willed to be buried in the Church of San Pietro Montorio, in whatever place the friars might choose; and this she said was her will which she desired to be executed, and thereto she besought all those whose duty it was to put it in execution for the love of God.

"At all this were present Signor Anton Maria Corazza, Signor Orazio Ansaldi, Messer Anton. Coppoli, Messer Ruggero Ruggeri, all of these being Comforters; Gio. Battista Nannoni, sacristan, Pierino, steward, and our chaplain, and I, Santi Vannini, who have written this.

"At the eleventh hour [5.30 A. M.] was celebrated the Holy Mass. The ladies communicated with much devotion; and after the mass until the hour of going forth they continued constantly in exercises of prayer and speech of faith and fervour."

The transcription of this important document may well be suspended a moment while we consider certain of its aspects and make some necessary additions. The imaginative reader can easily picture the awakening of the Cenci, if indeed any of them had slept, when, at about midnight [1] they saw these Brothers entering their cells, bearing lanterns and with faces covered in their sinister hoods. Comforters they may have been, but they were no less heralds of death. It appears from the record

[1] The Comforters chosen from the brothers assembled at the fifth hour of night (9.30 P. M.) at San Giovanni Decollato, and went forthwith to Tordinona and Corte Savella. It was therefore with accuracy that an *avviso* of September 11th said that the news of the death-sentence "was denounced to the Cenci at midnight."

that the news of the approaching punishment was given its victims without the communication at the same moment of the exact words of Moscato's sentence. Indeed, the news reached them before the Brothers of Mercy themselves knew the text. It thus happened that the Brothers understood Bernardo also to be condemned to death, whereas in the sentence his life was spared. They had communicated the dreadful news to him and were engaged in exhorting him when the Substitute Tranquillo Ambrosini arrived to warn them of their error.

It is important that we should now read what Carlo Bartolomeo Piazza wrote in the 17th century concerning this Company of St. John the Beheaded, "instituted in Rome in 1488, and entitled the Confraternity of Mercy. ". . . It redounds to the signal glory of the Most Noble Florentine Nation that one of the celebrated works of mercy done in Rome is its own, and rests upon its charity. The work is that of visiting, aiding, and comforting poor men condemned to death and of companioning them to the place of their execution." [1]

"On the day preceding the execution of justice this Company is advised, and it sends four brothers of the best disposition. And during the night these keep company with the condemned man, and they dispose him to confess his sins, keeping before his eyes the very bitter passion and shameful death of Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . and they have him kiss the Crucified Image, depicted on certain tablets; and they keep this before his eyes while they accompany him to the place of punishment,[2] reciting the

[1] *Opere Pie di Roma*, p. 502.

[2] At the headquarters of the Confraternity of St. John the Beheaded in Rome are still preserved several tablets, some of the 16th century; perhaps the very ones that were held before the Cenci. Two of them are painted in the style of Zuccari; one is by a Flemish painter. The subjects vary: Christ crucified, the beheading of John the Baptist, the journey to Calvary, etc. In the cloister is a collection of several sculptures of the end of the 15th century, with the device of the Company: John the Baptist's head in the basin. The graves below the paving are still filled with the bones of executed men. The oratory is decorated with interesting paintings by Salviati, Jacopino del Conte, Franco Veneziano and Pirro Ligorio.

A Brother of the Company of St. John the Beheaded

proper litanies and other prayers; nor do they ever quit him, even on the gallows-stairs, so long as he is alive. When all is over, they return, in their black cassocks and with faces hid, to their church; and in the evening about the 22nd hour they go with a numerous procession of brothers clad likewise in black, with torches, to take the corpse, and they bring it on a bier covered with black cloth to that same church of theirs, where they bury it at their cost. They have for device the head of St. John the Baptist in its basin."[1]

We now return to Giacomo. We may observe that in the record of the Company it is stated that he declared the instrument relative to his debt of 13,000 scudi to Marzio Colonna to be "falsely drawn and not true, but made in collusion with Signor Marzio." But there is no word that at that time he proclaimed Bernardo's innocence. In fact it was not until a little less than a year later, as we shall see, that the Brothers then present made any mention of such a speech.

We should note also the "remission" granted by Giacomo and Bernardo to the tailor, Emilio, called Marangone,[2] who was with Amilcare Orsini when the latter killed Rocco Cenci. Since a statement of pacification had been accorded Bruno, slayer of Cristoforo, and Orsini, slayer of Rocco, there was no longer any reason to deny the same to the obscure Emilio. When this Emilio had obtained his remission, he addressed a petition to Cardinal Aldobrandino, asking leave to return to Rome: "Although he had never been informed of any summons by a court . . . he supplicated that if perchance he had incurred any proscription or other prejudice through the aforementioned case, the Cardinal might deign . . . to do him the favour to ordain that any trial for this deed be quashed, and to graciously condone any contumacy of his."

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 503-504.

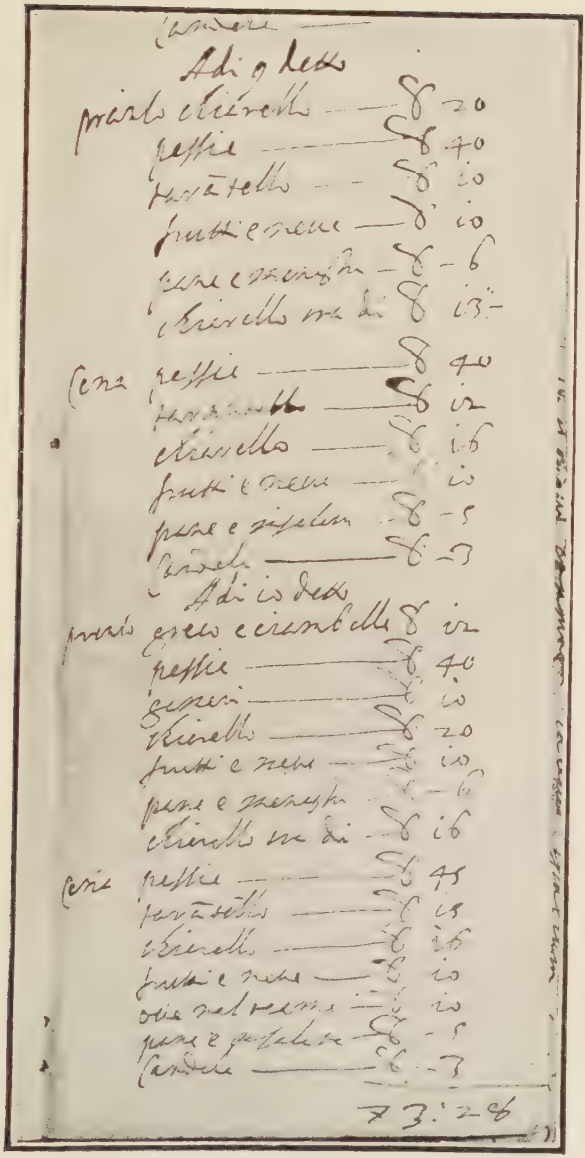
[2] Here called Bartolini, and elsewhere Ferrini. But perhaps this "Emilio Bartolini" is a slip for "Emilio di Bartolo Ferrini."

Cardinal Aldobrandino forwarded the plea to Monsignore Taverna, and the latter granted Marangone's petition. But soon the saddest news was received about the petitioner and his actions. An unsigned letter directed to the Cardinal reads: "There has come to Rome a certain Emilio Ferrini, nicknamed Marangone. This man was a tailor and later was in the service of the Count of Pitigliano, and was present at the murder of Rocco Cenci; and it is held a certain thing that he had a hand in the assassination of the Cavaliere Corbinelli, and was the one who murdered the said cavaliere at the instance of Ancharani. Your Illustrious Highness is begged to give an order to Monsignore the Governor to have this man taken and examined with all secrecy on the above-mentioned heads and upon matters of which information will be sent day by day. This Marangone may be found in the house of the Cardinal Sforza, or in that of Signore Cosimo Orsino di Pitigliano."

On the morning of the 11th at about the 15th hour (9.30 A. M.), to quote Vannini, one of the four Comforters of the Company of St. John the Beheaded: "Signor Giacomo and Signor Bernardo were taken by ministers of Justice out from the Tordinona. Signor Giacomo was set on a cart and conducted through Rome and torn with pincers. And Signor Bernardo was on another cart, and though no hurt was done him yet he was accompanied by our brothers; but they bore no tablet since he was not to die."

Giacomo was bound and "bare to the waist." The executioner gripped and tore away muscles and tendons with red-hot pincers, while he bore the unspeakable torture with heroic fortitude. Bernardo was seated in the other cart, without bonds or shackles. He was wrapped in a black cloak, in such a way as to cover his face.

At the head of the tragic procession marched the Brothers of the Stigmata, "unshod, with Apostolic sandals," and clad in "cassocks of ordinary serge of ash colour, with a heavy rope for girdle and attached to



List of the Last Meals of Beatrice Cenci

this rope a crown of thorns, of wood." [1] In a great and varied throng followed soldiers and *sbirri*, then the Court, the Brothers of Mercy, the first cart with Giacomo, the confessor, and the executioner; and the second with Bernardo. The four brothers of St. John the Beheaded, who had passed the night with the condemned men, stood, two by two, at their sides. The cortège was closed by other companies and confraternities, singing litanies, other detachments of *sbirri*, and a rabble of the populace.

The melancholy procession, leaving the Tordinona prisons, took the Via dell' Orso; it then turned through the via del Giglio, traversed the Piazza dell' Apollinare, passed Tor Sanguigna and Pasquino and came to Corte Savella; it wound its way past the Palazzo della Cancelleria and by way of the Piazza del Duca (to-day the Piazza Farnese) came into the via di Santa Maria di Monserrato.

Here the cortège halted, while "Signora Lucrezia and Signora Beatrice were haled forth from the prisons, and led to the Bridge on foot," ahead of "the aforesaid carriages." The other four Companions of St. John the Beheaded, delegated for this purpose, accompanied them. The two women were "unbound and wearing mourning garments."

The streets then traversed were the remainder of the via di Monserrato, Banchi, and San Celso. In those days these streets were among the longest, most populous, and beautiful of Rome; they were bordered by magnificent houses and palaces, many of which to-day retain their ancient aspect. It is unnecessary to mention the overwhelming throng of people that leaned out at doors, balconies, and windows, nor the throng that descended like a river from all Rome toward the Piazza di Ponte Sant' Angelo, which was the place of punishment. All seemed filled with pity for the Cenci, especially for Beatrice, who appeared younger than her actual age. Many followed, their eyes filled with tears; the women were sobbing, the

[1] Piazza: *Opere Pie*, p. 455.

men cursing. The *avvisi* of the day reveal the whole story; here they are dealing, not with secret matters, but with an open spectacle, hence known to all. But we have in addition the testimony of some who took part in the procession, such as Boezio Giunta, Substitute Prosecutor, who told Cardinal San Marcello that he got nothing there but hatred and hostility!

On every one's lips were the words: "Poor people! Poor, wretched folk! Unhappy men!" The story ran that even Cardinal di Santa Severina—"truly noteworthy for his virtuous life, for knowledge of human and divine laws, and for his wide experience of matters of this world" [1]—had censured the condemnation of the women. But the Pope, it was said, had listened by preference to the harsh proposals of the Governor, Monsignore Taverna, and the Most Excellent Ulisse Moscato. Others did not spare Clement VIII. The tale that in a burst of rage he had refused to permit the "poor" Cenci to defend themselves, that he had maltreated their advocates, driven them from his presence and even imprisoned them, leaped from mouth to mouth.

Vialardo, writing to the Grand Duke Ferdinand I, said that Beatrice had died "in most saintly fashion," but protesting and calling for vengeance on Clement, who had refused to hear her and to let the testimony for the defence be completed.

It was the belief of all that Beatrice had revealed to him the paternal outrage; other witnesses, too, had revealed it; but that Clement had refused to give ear to her or to the witnesses, or to all the prelates and nobles who had interceded for at least a commutation of the penalty.

There was pity for the Cenci brothers and for Lucrezia as well; but Beatrice had become the object of the general emotion and compassion. Paolucci wrote to the Cardinal d'Este on the very day of the punishment: "The death of the young girl, who was of very beautiful presence and of most beautiful life, has moved all Rome to compassion."

[1] Dolfin: *Relazione* cit., V, pp. 462-463.

Her almost childlike grace, which made her seem but eighteen to Paolucci, as we have seen, and to Vialardo but seventeen (though as a matter of fact her exact age was twenty-two years seven months and five days), compelled pity from all beholders. So, they were chopping the head off a little girl! All dwelt on the fact of her beauty. We know what Paolucci had written on that head. An *avviso* to the Court of Modena, of February 27th, had already said: "She is seventeen and very beautiful." Vialardo later describes her to the Grand Duke in four words: "very beautiful and valorous." She was "accounted beautiful," wrote a "director" to the Court of Urbino. The papal Sacristan, F. Luigi Vendeghini, writing to his mother in Ferrara, describes her as "a damsel of extraordinary beauty." [1]

She made a deep impression, further, by the courage she displayed as she walked in the midst of the grieving and horror-stricken procession and crowd. Yet her fortitude was surpassed by that of Giacomo. Lucrezia on the contrary was "a rag," [2] and Bernardo "never ceased weeping as he walked."

As we have seen, Beatrice had shown insolence rather than fortitude during the course of the trial. But outside the prisons she was celebrated as "bold," "constant," "virile," of so "great a heart" as to stupefy even the judges. It was said that she had supported "most bravely" long and atrocious tortures, had borne the *veglia* for nine hours. All this seemed confirmed when, amid the anguish of the crowd, she walked impassively and without faltering toward her death. The populace saw in her that strength with which, they were told, the first Christians had gone to their torture; and the populace acclaimed her as martyr.

It is therefore an error to believe that the aureole encircling the head of this hapless sinner was set there

[1] Letter of 12 September 1599 in the Vendeghini Archives at Ferrara.

[2] Cod. Urb. ct. c. 561, v.

later by historians, poets, and novelists, in order to attack the Papacy: by Muratori, because he wished to avenge the House of Este which Clement VIII had driven from Ferrara; by Shelley, because he "belonged to the Satanic school"; by Guerrazzi and by Niccolini, because they wished to instil in the Italians a contempt for the temporal rule. The later writers had only to avail themselves, for the purpose of their theses, of an emotion which had taken form in the very hour when Beatrice was making her way toward the scaffold. This emotion was a reaction to the excess of the penalty. Beatrice had indeed been a martyr to paternal iniquity, and this fact, as also the furious outburst of public feeling in those last days before the promulgation of the sentence, should have been taken into account. But Paolo Paruta makes a penetrating observation, when he says in speaking of Clement VIII: "He likes much to take his stand on certain rigours and legal terms, without well knowing how to distinguish between one time and another and one thing and another, or how to balance matters with higher and more important considerations, as is meet for princes to know."[1] If the Pope had exempted the two women from the pain of death, and had imprisoned them, as he did Bernardo, he would have better served Justice and his own reputation. For though he was at heart good, upright, devout, and charitable, so high did popular feeling run in the Cenci case that their condemnation and the confiscation of their property robbed him of his good fame even more than did the burning of Giordano Bruno.

In the morning, while half Rome was fighting its way into the areas of Ponte, Parione, and La Regola, Clement VIII came forth from the Quirinal, his seat during those days, and wended his way to St. John Lateran, to say "a low mass for the souls of the Cenci!"[2]

[1] *Op. cit.*, II, p. 543.

[2] The author of the *Relatione della morte*, etc., says that Clement VIII also went to Santa Maria degli Angeli to consecrate Cardinal Franc. Dietrichstein. We have discovered that this man was created Cardinal on March 3, 1599, but not that he was consecrated on Sept. 11th.

Let us return to the doleful procession, which has now arrived upon the Piazza in front of the Ponte Sant' Angelo, on the left bank of the Tiber. In the centre of this open space a very high scaffold has been erected. About its foot soldiers and *sbirri* are massed in close ranks. The windows, balconies and roofs of palazzi and houses, looking upon the square or in the neighbouring streets of Tordinona, Panico, San Celso, the Banchi and Paola, are black with spectators. The parapets of the bridge have been stormed by a mob, heedless of the danger they run of being pushed into the river at the slightest disorder. Individuals, in fact, do so fall: some of these are fished out, others drown.

The vast dark bulk of Castel Sant' Angelo bristles with heads; bastions, towers and outworks are fringed with them. The very prisoners are gratified by a view of this "edifying" spectacle. A cohort of soldiers and officials from the prisons and from the Vatican have made their way there by means of the causeway connecting Palace and Castle. Did Amerigo Capponi, himself, one wonders, have the courage to watch, from a gallery, the fall of the fair young head he had grown to cherish?

Every now and then the crowd which still surges towards the piazza breaks into sudden waves of massed humanity: the tumult and shouting are incessant. But silence falls on all when the head of the cortège appears, issuing from the via San Celso, and making its slow progress to the chapel reserved for those condemned to die, immediately to the right of the bridge-head.

Beatrice and Lucrezia entered the chapel first: then came Giacomo. His mangled body was unbound from the cart and carried in. Bernardo followed him. All heard mass, seeing one another, greeting one another, and speaking to one another for the last time. Then began the tragic ritual of execution. It proceeded with terrible deliberation, in the sultry atmosphere of an extremely warm day, one of those stifling, enervating mornings that come in a Roman September. During the six hours that it lasted many in the sun-smitten and closely packed crowd

were seized with faintness and collapsed. An *avviso* from Rome, dated a few days later, tells us that the total number of prostrations were not less than six hundred, and that, of this number, seven or eight died.

Bernardo was first brought from the chapel and placed on the scaffold so that he should be present, according to the terms of his sentence, at the horrible deaths of the others.

Then the officials returned to the chapel and took Lucrezia. Livid, tottering, she was upborne by the Comforters of St. John the Beheaded, their faces hidden by their black hoods. Stretched out on the bench, she was unconscious when the axe descended, severing her head.[1] Then arose a great stir amid the crowd, a subdued murmur, a repressed sobbing. Beatrice has appeared; she makes her way quickly; she climbs rapidly to the scaffold and "very courageously" lays her head on the block; it is severed at one stroke of the axe. No power could have checked the wailing cry which rose from that populace which, in its heart, had already sanctified her. Bernardo meanwhile had swooned for the second time; the Comforters might be seen succouring him. When he came to his senses, he began to weep; and his tears never ceased.

Now comes the most horrible moment of "justice." Giacomo, torn and mangled, is brought forward. The Comforters help him to his feet and set him on the scaffold. From that place he again proclaims Bernardo's innocence. Then he lays his head on the block; the headsman crushes it with a single sledge-hammer blow. As the body slumps, the executioner cuts the throat, quarters the

[1] In the famous *Relatione*, the description of the decapitation of Lucrezia Cenci states that she "could not succeed in placing her neck on the wooden block whereon the axe-iron falls." From this and other phrases of the same *Relatione* it might appear that the execution of the Cenci women was performed with a sort of machine, not much unlike the guillotine, which had been in use from the beginning of the sixteenth century. See Bertolotti, pp. 157-158; Maes, in Il Cracas, no. 158, pp. 280-284; Aless. Ademollo: *Le Giustizie a Roma*, in the *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria*, V (Rome, 1882), p. 349. But, we repeat, it is not wise to trust the unsupported statements of that *Relatione*.

The Place of Punishment at Ponta Sant' Angelo, 1580

trunk, and hangs the quarters, butcher-fashion, to the hooks protruding from the scaffold.

"This morning," wrote the Ambassador Mocenigo to his lord, "they put to death the Cenci, convicted of having procured the death of their father. The elder son was torn and then clubbed to death; the heads of mother and daughter were taken off. And because a younger brother learned of the matter after the deed and did not reveal it, His Holiness willed that he go free from death, but that he be present at all these tortures, on the same platform; and there he several times swooned, as the last dues were rendered to God by these unfortunates." [1]

When Giacomo's sufferings were ended, the confraternities formed in line and began once more to recite their litanies; the Court, ministers of justice, and soldiers departed; the *sbirri* reconducted Bernardo to Tordinona. Only some of the Brothers remained on guard over the bodies, which were left for long on the spot. Vannini wrote: "At the 20th hour the body of Signora Beatrice was granted to the Company of the Stigmata of St. Francis . . . and the body of Signora Lucrezia was granted to her kin." And an *avviso:* "The corpses were left until the 23d hour to the public view, that is, the ladies each on a bier with lit torches round about, and Giacomo hanging in quarters." And that part of the Roman populace which had been unable to be present at the execution swarmed into the Piazza del Ponte to see the pitiful and bloody remains.

[1] A brief description of the death of the Cenci is also given by the sacristan, F. Luigi Vendeghini, to his mother, Laura Vendeghini, at Ferrara, under date 12 Septr., 1599: "This (sic) morning a terrible spectacle. They publicly beheaded a mother and a daughter of singular beauty, while a son had his flesh torn from his living body for murdering his father, with the help of the said mother and daughter. A younger son was present on the scaffold and watched the deaths of his mother, sister and brother." (Letter in the Vendeghini archives at Ferrara, already quoted.) The date of Vendeghini's letter is not in agreement with his words "this morning." Either he makes the mistake of dating it the 12 September instead of the 11, or writes "this morning" for "yesterday morning." Possibly he began his letter on the 11th and finished and dated it on the 12th.

Finally leave was granted for their removal to their graves in various churches. Three funeral cortèges were quickly formed. The Company of Pity of the Florentines summarily assembled Giacomo's remains, laid them out *in figura*, and bore them to the Church of St. John the Beheaded. In the evening it delivered them to his relatives; these, respecting the last wishes of the deceased, brought them to San Tommaso de' Cenci.

Lucrezia's body, put in Velli's hands, was carried by some Companions of the Stigmata to San Gregorio and there buried.[1]

But the great funeral, the indescribably turbulent homage rendered by the populace of Rome—and also its protest against the cruelty of Justice—was reserved for the body of Beatrice. Even while her body still lay on the bier at the scaffold's foot some girls had come to crown the pallid severed head with flowers. Gradually the piazza filled once more, this time not with the mob alone, but with confraternities, monks, nobles in their carriages, and foreigners who chanced to be in Rome. An interminable procession was formed, with lighted candles, *labara*, and crosses. The recorder of St. John the Beheaded himself, as well as the informant of the Court of Urbino, permits an announcement of the "very great honour" done her to escape him.[2]

The immense procession wound through the via Giulia; it crossed the Tiber on the Ponte Siesto, and climbed the tortuous tree-lined via del Gianicolo to San Pietro in Montorio. There the bier, carried by the Brothers of the Stigmata, was set down in the centre of the church. The throng did not diminish; it assembled again, with tears, flowers, and candles. Vialardo wrote to the Grand

[1] Perhaps, as some say, San Gregorio della Divina Pietà not far from the Cenci palace.

[2] In the *Giornale* is set down the expense borne by the Company "for this justicing": to sacristans and factors, 45 soldi; for Greco wine and sweetmeats, 40 soldi; for 12 scaffold-builders at Sant' Orsola, 60 soldi; for 5 scaffold-builders at San Gio., 50 soldi; for travelling-expense, 30; for the capes, 10 soldi; (total) 2 scudi, 35 soldi.

Church of San Pietro, Montorio

Duke: "All the populace ran to weep over the body until midnight, and to put lighted candles round about it."

At dead of night when the church at last was empty, the Brothers of the Sacred Stigmata and the canons minor of the Osservanti, who served the parish (among them Father Andrea Belmonte, Beatrice's confessor), lowered the girl's body into its resting-place in the apse; by its side they placed the head on a silver platter. Then all was sealed with a bare stone.

On September 25th this note was entered in the Libro della Depositeria Generale: "19.25 scudi in cash, by mandate of the Vice Regent of the Vicar, to Capt. Domenico Marsilii, Constable, to give to the Executioner of Justice for the Justice performed upon the Cenci!"

CHAPTER XXIX

A FORTUNE IN RUINS

For many days after the execution of the Cenci Rome talked of nothing else. The muttering against the Pope, Molella, Moscato, and Taverna, seemed rather to increase in bitterness than to diminish. Our witnesses to this are the letters of the ambassadors and the *avvisi*.

The principal cause of the public murmur was the dissemination of the news of the confiscation of the Cenci property, which struck at the children of Giacomo, innocent and of tender age, without regard for the restrictions against alienation. Accusations of another nature were uttered. As we have seen, a small tablet with a representation of the Passion or other pious subject was commonly held before those condemned to death on their way to the block. We have also seen that the Company of St. John the Beheaded, being informed that Bernardo had been reprieved from the capital penalty, had thought well to omit that formality in his case, "since he was not to die." The story gained currency that on this account Clement VIII had fallen into a fury! It was also said, not without a touch of irony, that he had asked, with tearful anxiety, if the victims had gone contrite to their death. Many added a report of some strange words spoken by him, or at his behest, to Lodovica Velli. He had sent the Commissioner Sassatello to her—so the tale was reported to the Court of Urbino—to present his sympathies "for the punishment meted out to Giacomo, which could not in justice have been any other." He added that he had been forced to respect the "written sentence of the law"—in other words the sentence which he himself had directed should be written!

On September 29th, says another *avviso* to the Court of Modena, Lodovica was summoned by the Pope, who had

been greatly moved when informed of "her great infelicity and misery. . . . After she had exposed her unhappy state, being left with six[1] small children, His Beatitude first made his excuse for being compelled to perform the written sentence of execution, in which he had done much less than should have been done in so flagrant a case; as, for the rest of the property, he would observe every respect that might be possible to her benefit, in token of which he himself would be content if she would elect one of the Cardinals of the Sacred College, and to him that case would be entrusted utterly and completely; and he assured her that she should have more favour from His Holiness than she would dare ask of her own accord."

When we think of the massacre of the Cenci family and the confiscation of its property, we are half inclined to attribute such an assertion as "he had done much less than should have been done" to some sly malignity on the part of this correspondent of the Este.

As for Moscato, just made a cavaliere for his great deserts, Vialardo wrote of him, on October 1st: "He has attempted to get Amerigo Capponi, vice-castellan, into trouble, saying that this man wished to arrange the escape of the young Cenci girl from the Castello; but he could not attain his purpose." And indeed Capponi, who was a tough customer, had no fear of Moscato's teeth. He remained a long time at his post, in fact, until his death in that very Castello, twenty years later (September 22, 1619).[2]

It is certain that the popular contempt for all who had had any share in the trial grew more marked as time went by. We may recall Boezio Giunta writing to Cardinal San Marcello that he had never "gained aught but the hatred and enmity of many."

But in all the public discussions the matter of the confiscation bulked largest.

Even, before the sentence was pronounced, and during the progress of the trial, it had been whispered that the

[1] In fact, seven.

[2] Amerigo Capponi's body was transported to Florence.

Treasury and the Camera meant to divide the spoils.[1] On January 16, 1599, or shortly after, an *avviso* to the Court of Urbino said: "About an hour ago I heard that Signor Giacomo Cenci, son of Francesco, has been gaoled. And they say he is suspected of having been the cause of his father's violent death. Even if it be not true, he will have to follow in his father's footsteps and make a composition for some good round sum; in any case the estate seems marked out for such things." A more insulting allusion to the Treasury could hardly be uttered with a more indifferent air. Even though not guilty, Giacomo will have to pay as his father always did, it being henceforth settled that the property of the Cenci shall pass out of their hands by means of fines and compositions! But another *avviso* of February 10th brought more news: "Our Master, having heard it sometimes rumoured that this incarceration was for naught else than to extract money by forcing some accommodation out of that opulent heritage, which on other occasions has yielded up a good and useful harvest to the Camera, has ordered, so we hear, that this case be pushed to an end, and that it come either to the punishment due, or to acquittal, without the Treasury's hearkening to any word of compounding for money. And thus he has closed the mouth of many who were talking too freely."

Now, if the "many who were talking too freely" did not abandon their doubts and criticisms, the facts finally justified them! Incidentally, these murmurers were not all insignificant folk; the ambassador, Mocenigo, among others, wrote on June 12th to the Signory of Venice that if perchance the Cenci should be condemned to death, "their plea before the Treasury failing, the Camera will win the value of more than five hundred thousand scudi."

At the same period the informant of the Court of Urbino wrote: "The Treasury has always refused to give either the trial record or copies of it to the accused, meaning perhaps to include in it later the record of

[1] "*Che il Fisco avrebbe 'infiscato' e la Camera 'incamerato.'*" It is almost hopeless to attempt to render puns.—*Trans.*

the legal proceedings in the Kingdom. And even if they cannot get this now they hope to have it in time." The suggestions were unfounded, yet they reveal the attitude of the Romans toward the menaces of the Treasury. Indeed, the same "director" picked up, on September 1st, this singular anecdote: "They say indeed that our Master had the thought of confiscating all their property, and this was also the opinion of a good number of the Cardinals; but Cardinal de Guevara found a distinction of such sort that it has preserved the property. The passage is a sweet morsel, and therefore is here written down. This Cardinal then, arguing *ab exemplo*, said that we hold through faith that if Adam had had sons before he fell into the sin of disobedience, those sons would have been exempt from original sin; and therefore that these sons of Giacomo being created before their father conceived the intention to slay Francesco his own father, therefore they were exempt from the penalty of losing their wealth by favour of that inheritance of innocence. And in view of this reasoning of Guevara, Giacomo was again interrogated *a tempore intentionis*, and he confessed to an intention for ten years back. As there are children of a greater age, these by Guevara's argument will alone be exempt, and not the others since born."

It would be pleasant to believe that Cardinal de Guevara, imbued with pity for Giacomo's sons, alleged Adam's sin to preserve their share of the patrimony. His thesis, however subtle, would have availed nothing, for when Giacomo was condemned no one of his children had come even to their eighth year!

Meanwhile it was said that against the quibbles of the Cardinal de Guevara the Treasury was preparing others, in view of the contingency that Bernardo might be acquitted, as his advocates hoped, and block the plans of the Treasury by pleading his minority.

On the very day of the Cencis' death, when all the motives behind the sentence were not yet known, an *avviso* alluded to the probable confiscation and to the story of Beatrice's bequest of 22,000 scudi (*sic*) to the Company

of the Stigmata. The *avviso* added significantly: "if the Company can get it!"

Thus it is plain that the Treasury's avaricious action was foreseen! Bitter mockeries were bandied on the subject. A certain Ubaldino Ubaldini was among those who died of sunstroke while watching the executions on that intolerably hot day. He "held some 6,000 scudi in offices," which at his decease were to return to the Camera. The correspondent wrote to Urbino: "Even after death these Cenci would fain be of service to the Camera!" [1]

The discussions kept giving rise to fresh conjectures and announcements: "The confiscation of the property is being considered . . . and in the end though it be not put into effect entire, in any case the Court will mulct from it at least 60,000 scudi. This is the accounting made by the members of the Curia themselves." These words were written on September 22d; and on the 25th, the day after Vialardo had written to the Grand Duke that the Treasury was "raging after the property," Urbino was informed: "The matter of the confiscation of the Cenci's property goes not well at all, since in addition to the edict already noted, another was affixed on Thursday, likewise by the Treasury. This was a notice inviting bids from any who wish to buy the hay of six very fine and good estates of theirs; and this is a token that the Camera is already in possession. And restitution from those hands is no easy thing to compass!" And since it was also learned that the Apostolic Chamber had occupied the Cenci Palace at La Dogana,[2] the following *avviso* awakened no surprise: "The Camera has confiscated all the property of the late Francesco Cenci, which they believe may come to 300,000 scudi; though Bernardo and the

[1] In a postscript at the end of some copies of the *Relatione sulla morte del sig. Francesco Cenci*, etc., we find, appositely, that among those who died of sunstroke through watching the execution of the Cenci was "a certain Valdino Valdini, a young man of thirty-three years, a gallant fellow, brother of the Signora Renza so much lauded in Rome for her rare beauty; she was married to a brother of Monsignore Renzi." We have accepted as most probable the name Ubaldini; but there is great variation and uncertainty in the Mss.

[2] On Sept. 25, 1599. Orbaan, *Documenti sul Barocco*, p. 227.

children of Giacomo have appealed from this confiscation, holding it null and void as the property is in fee tail, and this cannot be extinguished through the parricide." The *avviso* concluded: "The appeal has been admitted." [1]

When the news of the confiscation was known for a fact, a general uproar arose. The public voice did not hesitate to assert that this family had been practically destroyed merely "to raise money."

The long and accurate examinations of the documents which we have made do not permit us to concur in the opinion that the trial of the Cenci was conducted with the intention of procuring the confiscation of their property. Save for the cruelty of its methods, the trial was evidently prosecuted with moderation and impartiality. But we heartily disavow any alignment with those who have attempted and still attempt to justify that confiscation by reference to the conditions, to "the legal doctrines," to the statutes, edicts, usages of the time! Confiscations, like fines, and the fixing of their amount, were at the discretion of judges, *arbitrio judicis.* Let us recall that it was the same Francesco Cenci, when under indictment, who had offered to the Pope to pay a fine and so free himself from prison and trial for sodomy. And the bargain had been struck on the spot! And we know also how every crime might be made good, especially in the case of rich and noble ruffians, provided they were ready to pay fine after fine. The system amounted to a veritable exploitation of delinquency.[2]

No precise regulations and dispositions for the imposition of fines existed. Each case was adjudged on its merits. It is obvious that Clement VIII need not have ordered or consented to the confiscation, precisely as the informant of the Court of Urbino had written on February 10th, 1599.

[1] In the *Libro della Depositeria Generale di Papa Clemente VIII,* 1600, 5 Feb., we find: "9.80 scudi to Biagio Cappelli for various expenses incurred in taking possession of the Cenci property."

[2] See Ricci: *Anime dannate* (Milan, 1918), p. 59.

Nor is any reference to the character of the period of value in this case of ours. The historian may rightfully palliate a fact when he knows it to have been committed in times when the public conscience unanimously failed to recognise it as reprehensible; he cannot excuse it when he sees that even contemporary opinion denounced it as immoral.

Six days before his death, Giacomo Cenci, foreseeing the coming events, named the magnifici Valerio Antonelli and Virginio Jacobino as his procurators to uphold his rights over Assergi, Pescomaggiore, and Filetto, in short, the Cenci property in the Kingdom, outside the Papal State.

A week after the execution, Lodovica Cenci named Francesco Scotusio solicitor for her children. He had already held this post for their father, after having served Francesco Cenci as steward and overseer of his children.

Meanwhile the Treasury and the Camera Apostolica continued their work. On September 18th an edict was issued by Molella, Civil Prosecutor. This advised the creditors of the estate of Francesco Cenci, that they should appear within six days before the notary, Girolamo Mazziotto, to exhibit the proofs of their credits, according to the orders (so said the edict itself) of the "Most Reverend Monsignore Taverna, Governor of Rome, specially deputed in this case by our Master." The task assigned to Taverna exposed him to the especial hatred of the people.

An *avviso* of the 22nd informed Urbino: "Yesterday an edict at the instance of the Prosecutor has been seen publicly posted up,[1] that all the creditors of the Cenci should make themselves known and show proof of their credits."

A long procession of creditors began; to follow it we should have to write a useless and wearisome volume. It lasted many months; it included "servants and stewards" of the Cenci, such as the Florentine Tommaso Federighi,

[1] The edict, drawn on the 18th, was perhaps affixed on the 21st; or else the director did not see it until the 21st.

who claimed about 300 scudi; "money-lenders," such as Braccio Baglioni; "furnishers of goods," like Gian Battista and Defendio Alborghetti, who asked to be paid 267 scudi for the mourning-garments made for the Cenci after the father's death; or Giacomo delle Pozze, banner-maker, who asked 210 scudi for the rich hangings with the Cenci arms which he had executed for the Church of La Madonna del Pianto; individuals who had done services in prison, such as Costanza di Silvestro, Florentine; keepers and "soldiers" of the prisons, including Giovan Morichetti, Barnabeo Lateri, and Gian Battista Gentile who had in Tordinona supplied 500 scudi worth of food "to Giacomo and others"; and the widow of Ascanio Massi, whose husband had died in the interim.

Representations from the religious foundations which had been empowered in Francesco Cenci's will and in that of Beatrice to dower a number of girls, to be put in possession of the sums assigned to them and for which they had publicly pledged themselves, grew increasingly urgent. Insistent pleas were made by the Capuchins, the Fathers of San Silvestro del Quirinale, the Fathers of Jesus, the Company of the Stigmata. This last body, further, made representations that "the legacy bequeathed by Signora Beatrice Cenci of happy memory" should be excluded from the general confiscation. "And it was resolved that to this end the Lord Guardians should seek an audience with Our Master, and also that information of it should be written and given to the Most Illustrious Cardinal Montalto our Protector." The business dragged on, in the midst of difficulties and proposals, until February 10, 1600. On that date the idea of petitioning the Pope was mooted; the silence of documents on this point reveals that the petition either was not presented, such an attempt being henceforth considered vain, or, if it was presented, brought no result.

Of the many creditors, some received satisfaction, others did not. Some of the latter were refused because they had not presented papers "in due form." Thereat a second edict was published, by Monsignore Taverna,

establishing a new limit of time, after which all actions would be invalid.

The press of creditors began again.

Among others was Luzio Savelli, husband of the deceased Antonina. He asked to be reimbursed 16,000 scudi for a pledge he had made to Francesco Cenci, which was to have been satisfied by the sale of a castle.

The Governor, who had taken it on himself by his edicts to pay these numerous debts, obtained from Clement VIII, in May 1600, a *motu proprio* authorising him to put up to auction the great estate of Torrenova, about nine kilometres from Rome on the via Labicana. Two-thirds of the sum which should be realised was to be set aside for benefit of the creditors; the other third was to be restricted for reasons of fee tail.

Not a soul appeared at the auction. The matter was prorogued for a few days; finally, an offer of 100 scudi the rubbio was received. But Taverna did not sanction the sale, through fear, he declared, that he had overstepped his prerogative when he, and not the Pope, had granted the prorogation, an exhibition of prudence which reveals he had expected a better price.

Meanwhile the situation of Lodovica and her small children was growing daily more desperate; and the whole city proclaimed Monsignore Taverna a persecutor of the innocent. Her petitions are indeed pitiful; she says in one of them that Bernardo also, in prison, is near to dying of hunger. Being penniless, how can she proceed in her action laying claim to the property, though His Holiness had permitted a discussion of the action by committing it to the Governor of Rome, that he should settle it in accordance with justice?

In order to live on from day to day, from hour to hour, the wretched widow was obliged to sell furniture, clothing, even some of the linen from her trousseau, once so splendid with its silk and gold embroideries![1] She persisted:

[1] The inventory of this extremely rich supply of linen bears the date of June 27, 1591. It cannot be reproduced entire, on account

"Lodovica Velli de Cenci and her poor orphan sons expose with all humility to Your Beatitude that since the Treasury took away their property by virtue of the aforesaid sentence, and after the case was committed to Monsignore the Governor, the petitioners have lacked all things necessary to their subsistence, and very often have had naught to eat. And this has proceeded from the scant money they have had by order of said Monsignore the Governor, which it is believed does not exceed the sum of 600 scudi in all that time, and this cannot suffice for so great a family—they are eight in number, besides the nurses and servants. And in addition they must furnish the costs of the lawsuit. . . . The poor orphan children go ragged and die of hunger . . . as is now notorious through all Rome."

On August 10th, 1600, Clement VIII granted full powers to the Governor, Monsignore Taverna, to make a settlement with the Cenci. But later, in a *motu proprio* of the following October 15th, he ordered that the hamlet of Torrenova, of about 900 rubbi, should be sold to the highest bidder, "and in the bid should be included a note on a bank, and the price of 499 rubbi," that thus the creditors might be immediately paid. "The remainder, which was asserted to be subject to fee tail, should be invested in several securities and consigned to the Camera, pending the judgment in the suit brought by Bernardo and the sons of Giacomo." Consonantly with this *motu proprio*, a new edict was posted on November 14, 1600. And Torrenova was assigned to Giovan Francesco Aldobrandini, the Pope's nephew. Nine days later he appeared with a bank

of its length. A few passages will suffice: "19 chemises of cloth in Roman style, worked and not worked, 40 scudi; 2 chemises for pregnancies, 15 scudi. . . . 2 chemises of curtain-cloth worked with silk, for pregnancies, 20 scudi. . . . 3 chemises for women, worked one with silk and two with gold, 25 scudi. . . . 2 towels, one worked in white, with open-work, the other worked with red and green silk, 25 scudi. . . . 2 pairs of pillow-cases of curtain-cloth, worked with silk and gold, 13 scudi. . . . 2 caps embroidered with ordinary gold, 5 scudi"; and an infinite number of chemises, towels, pillow-cases, caps, handkerchiefs, etc.

bill for 91,000 scudi, signed by Filippo Guicciardini, "on the assumption that the holding consists of 900 rubbi, subject to settlement when its extent is verified." More than 46,000 scudi were invested in various securities, "to be consigned to the Camera or to the Commissioners designated or to whoever should rightfully receive them. The remaining 44,549 scudi were paid out to various persons who had duly executed the warrants, as appears in the Acts of the Governor's notary for March 6, 1601." [1]

It is needless to say how deep was the impression made on all Rome by these occurrences, not only because Torrenova was put up at auction while the suit of the Cenci against the confiscation was still in process, but also because the estate had not even been awarded to the highest bidder. The business had been conducted in such a manner, by means of such mysterious prorogations, that it fell into the hands of the General of the Papal Army, the nephew of the Pope! There can be no question that in this matter Clement VIII fell into error after error and confirmed the judgment Paruta has given of him. It may have been a revolt of public opinion which induced the Pope to urge Monsignore Taverna to bring to an end the suit brought by Bernardo, the sons of Giacomo and others of the Cenci house against the Treasury, which had seized their property. Public opinion likewise induced Serafino della Rota, on December 28th, to declare that property inalienable, and its sale consequently null and void.

Lodovica was well advised in requesting an immediate settlement from the Treasury. Unable to ignore public opinion, the Pontiff consented that the confiscated property be restored, but on two conditions: one, that the heirs should pay into the Treasury 80,000 scudi; the other, that they should acknowledge the alienations already made, in other words that Torrenova should remain in the hands of his nephew!

On June 9, 1601, a composition was entered into between the Camera and the Cenci family: on the 27th a

[1] *Relazione* cit., c. 29 r.

decree of restitution to them of their property was made. It need hardly be said that the estate of Torrenova was not included in this.

Lodovica's ratification of the sale of Torrenova did not restrain the surviving children of Giacomo from bringing suit in 1641 against the Princess Olimpia Aldobrandini and her husband, Marc' Antonio Borghese, asking that the sale of the property and Lodovica's ratification be declared null and void. The suit, transmitted by both parties to their heirs, came to an end only on June 27, 1699, or a hundred years after the tragic death of Giacomo.

It is not possible here to follow all the successive phases in this intricate tangle of lawsuits.

On July 16, 1601, Tiberio, son of the Girolamo Ceuli, deceased, a very wealthy merchant and banker, promised to pay to the Camera Apostolica the 80,000 scudi agreed.[1] Three days later the Treasury received authority from Clement VIII to create a special funding-account, called the Cenci Fund, to facilitate the payment of the debt.

After about five months, we find the entry in the *Libro della Depositeria Generale:* "6,000 (*sic*) scudi in money paid on a mandate of the Camera until the 22d of August past, to Signor Pompeo Molella, for his share of the 80,000 scudi in the composition made by the Reverend Camera with the Cenci."

On the same day (December 18th) 30,000 scudi were deposited in "Castel Sant' Angelo, in the old treasury: giuli and testoni in thirty canvas bags." These were "moneys received from Tiberio Ceuli on account of the 80,000 of the Cenci settlement." Cardinal Aldobrandino and Monsignore Taverna were present; certainly neither of them gave a thought to the wrong and injury to unhappy children that those 30,000 scudi represented!

[1] Not Tiberio *Cenci*, as Bertolotti repeatedly writes his name (p. 451), but Tiberio Ceuli. He had a palazzo on the via Giulia, now the via Sacchetti. The documents of the day are full of references to his name. . . . He died on Aug. 8, 1605, and was buried in the Chiesa Nuova. See Orbaan: *Documenti sul Barocco*, pp. 58, 60; Eugenia Strong: *La Chiesa Nuova* (Rome, 1923), p. 103.

Another 16,000 scudi were later deposited, on July 30, 1602.

New decrees followed successively in reference to Torrenova. One of them was caused by the necessity of freeing the property from a ground rent of 100 scudi yearly, which had been discovered after Aldobrandini's purchase. Others concerned sales: to Scipione Borghese, the hamlet of Testa di Lepre on the right bank of the Tiber, 14 kilometres from Rome, also the holding of Tagliente; to Marc' Antonio Borghese, Castel Campanile; to Cardinal Barberini (later Urban VIII), Falcognano and another part of the Cenci property.

When the news of the restitution of the Cenci's property was published, those who held credits against the Camera Apostolica through having taken part in the conduct of the trial, feared that they could no longer collect that which was due them, or that they believed was due them. They straightway presented requests and pleas. We may mention Antonio Cicalotti, Substitute for the Commissioner of the Camera itself (he was later paid on May 15th, 1602); Gaspare Giuzza, who had been assigned to the capture of Marzio Catalano in the mountains of Ascrea; Giulio Cesare Paleario, who had charge of the transcription and summarising of the trial-record; Boezio Giunta, Substitute Prosecutor, present at so many of the examinations [1] during the early development of the case. Some of these pleas are interesting documents.

"Gaspare Giuzza of Fano, most devoted servant of Your Holiness, was sent forth two years since by the Most Illustrious Signor Cardinal Vicar with a warrant, and was ordered out to see if he might lay hands on that Marzio Catalano who was implicated in the death of Francesco Cenci. And though the man had taken flight among the heights of Ascrea, rough mountain regions, and in winter besides, nevertheless through the great diligence that the petitioner used, in a few days he made the man prisoner, who was then by him securely conducted

[1] At about twenty, from November 1598, to May 30, 1599.

to the cells of Tordinona; and he later confessed the assassination, and by his confession the other accomplices were held and their confessions obtained, by which justice has taken its course, and many thousands of scudi have accrued to the Camera. But since the undersigned has never received recognition for anything, nor have even his travelling expenses been satisfied, nay, more he received an infirmity for which he has never yet found a cure through the too great suffering he bore, for he was obliged to pass entire nights in the country and in the midst of the snows; therefore he has recourse with all humility to the Most Sacred Feet of Your Beatitude, supplicating him for some recognition out of what has come to the Camera, and he will always pray God for the long life and happy condition of Your Holiness." [1]

Paleario made the following appeal to Taverna: "Giulio Cesare Paleario humbly exposes that the trial-records of the Signori Cenci were brought to Signor Ortenzio Orno, by whom the charge and order was given to the petitioner that he should make a summary of said trial, with the general record of all decisions and testimony by examinates, and that he should also read these records to said Ortenzio. And because there was little time to do these things, as the records were of four thousand and some hundreds of pages, therefore did the present writer by order of Francesco Scotusio, solicitor of said Cenci, hire writers to set down the investigations and everything that was done; and said Francesco to this end made a payment to the present writer to bind the bargain. And further the poor Signora Beatrice Cenci said to the present writer, in the presence of two witnesses, that she had given orders to said Francesco to pay the petitioner and all the writers in full, and she willed that as much be given to Signor Ortenzio as to the other advocates; which thing said Francesco has never done, in despite of his having received great sums of money for this purpose, but he keeps it to his own use, nor will he pay

[1] For his travelling expenses, Giuzza had been "satisfied," at least in part. See Beatrice Cenci, Vol. I, p. 264, note 2.

the labours of others. Therefore Your Most Illustrious Highness is besought to deign to order expressly that this present writer be paid, as well as all those who have served in this case." [1]

But the saddest and most plaintive appeal is that of Boezio Giunta, addressed to no less than three Cardinals: Rusticucci, Antoniani, and di San Marcello. To the last he wrote: "I having served in the tribunal of the Most Illustrious Lord Vicar as Substitute Prosecutor in the Cenci case, with many unspeakable labours by day and night continually in the Castello, Tordinona, Corte Savella and elsewhere, and up to now having never gained aught but the hatred and enmity of many, now that composition has been made, have recourse to your accustomed benignity . . . that my accustomed hundredth part at least be given me, as, in that very Cenci case, there was paid me, by order and mandate of Monsignore . . . Cardinal Aldobrandino, Chamberlain, the hundredth part on the goods and offices of Mons. Guerra, confiscated by the Camera."

To Cardinal Antoniani he wrote: "I have recourse to the supreme bounty of Your Excellency . . . that through your bounty you may order Monsignore the Governor or whatever person is proper, that as the twentieth part was assigned to the Signor Prosecutor [Molella] in this Cenci case, and the rank of cavaliere to Signor Ulisse Moscato, the judge, so should it be reasonable that my accustomed hundredth part be granted to me also, who have done such labours," etc.

Cardinal Antoniani transmitted the plea to Aldobrandino with this endorsement: "Please be so kind as to allow recognition of his hundredth part for his labours *in causa Cinciorum*."

Another cry came also to the sacred ears of Clement VIII. It was from the mouths of Lucrezia's daughters, who till then had been living on charity.

[1] An obligation of Bernardo to G. B. Piselli for 250 scudi is also known. Bernardo had borrowed the money in Tordinona to obtain a copy of the trial and order the defence of himself and his sister. See Bertolotti, p. 124.

In November, 1599, and in May, 1600, Mario Vipereschi had given them 180 scudi for their maintenance. This Vipereschi was the son of him who, in 1595, during Francesco Cenci's lifetime, had received Torrenova and Testa di Lepre as leaseholds, by order of the Pope; he had undertaken the obligation to pay down immediately 16,000 scudi to wipe out those debts of Signor Francesco's sons which the Camera Auditor, Camillo Borghese, later Paul V, had considered it just and opportune to pay. The leasehold agreement naturally continued in force; and the younger Vipereschi made the new extraordinary payments by order of the Governor.

But from May till November, nothing more had been given to Lucrezia's daughters; and they make appeal to the Pope.

"Gregoria, Porzia, and Claudia Velli, poverty-stricken girls, orphaned of father and mother, find themselves, through their extreme need and the condemnation of their mother, abandoned by all and of marriageable age. They possess naught else in the world but 3,000 scudi given them by the said Francesco, who, notwithstanding his notorious avarice, yet on learning the great calamities of these poor girls when he took their mother to wife, promised them the said 3,000 scudi to be shared among the three to dower them, and in the meantime a subsistence with which till now they have sustained their wretched lives. And because the estate of said Francesco, with the interest of which their subsistence was supplied, has now been sold . . . (in view of the difficulty thereafter of obtaining such interest) they supplicate that through the love of the Glorious Virgin, whom these unhappy girls have vowed to serve in a nunnery, Your Beatitude may deign to order Monsignore the Governor of Rome to pay them said 3,000 scudi without security."

Ottavio Tignosino bolstered up the plea of his three kinswomen, himself appealing to Clement VIII, that he should make provision for their sustenance and arrange for them to remain in some house of religion. Monsignore Taverna was charged to examine the requests. He called

for the agreement made shortly after November 20, 1593, between Lucrezia Velli and Francesco Cenci. He found therein that this latter had indeed pledged himself to give to the three girls "their victuals, but not their clothing, in his own house or in a nunnery," as Lucrezia might judge preferable, until their eighteenth year; and to give to each one a marriage portion of 1,000 scudi.

But even above these unhappy orphan girls hovered the birds of prey! In the Cenci-Bolognetti papers we find the minutes of a petition to the Pope made by the girls' brothers, asking that their uncle, Tiberio Velli, be not permitted to "take from these maidens those few possessions left them by their mother, the said Lucrezia."

The Pope was now inclined to heal, as far as was possible, this endless succession of sorrows and miseries. He received the requests favourably: blocked Tiberio Velli's attempted appropriation of the "few possessions," ordered that the 3,000 scudi be paid to the girls "with the unpaid interest," and that, after their mother's dreadful end, they should dwell remote from the world and in the peace of the cloister.

CHAPTER XXX

BERNARDO CENCI

Before bringing our tragic tale to a close we must linger for a time over the vicissitudes of the other characters left pining in prison.

On September 5, 1599, six days before the execution of Giacomo and the two women, Cesare Cenci was again examined, in Tordinona, by Moscato. Molella also was present.

Cesare would not admit that he had spoken with Fra' Pietro at La Minerva, nor that he had given the doublet and horse to Olimpio that he might be gone from Rome.

"The Court knows well that this is a bare-faced lie."

Cesare did not change his tone when Agostino de Amicis was led before him. Agostino picked him out from among three other men. But the confrontation was useless; Cesare denied everything. "Do I know why he wishes to tell this lie against me? Who lacks enemies? I know not who wishes me well and who ill." And even as he was being led away he repeated: "I say that it is all lies!"

On September 18th, or one week after the dreadful day of execution, Moscato ordered Cesare and Fra' Pietro to be respited in order that they might both make provision for their defence. Francesco Vialardo informs us, on November 13th, that the first had been discharged: "Cesare Cenci, who was liberated, was to have returned to prison for certain slanders; but the French Ambassador has saved him, and now seeks to save the boy, Bernardo."

Possibly Fra' Pietro Calvetti was freed with him; but we have no further news of the luckless friar.

Let us pass to Cesare Bussone and his honourable kinsmen of Terni and Piediluco.

On September 18, 1599, Orazio Pomella, the handy man of the Cenci, was summoned to Moscato's quarters. After the execution of his masters, this call struck terror to his bones; he ran to answer the summons. Moscato wished to question him about Bussone and Monsignore Guerra.

Yes, Pomella knew them both; he had seen them together often, and knew that in the preceding spring Monsignore had twice sent Bussone out of Rome "to find a certain Marco Tullio, kinsman of that Cesare, and Olimpio, who had been sought in the case of Signor Giacomo and the other Cenci gentlefolk . . . and Monsignore would withdraw to one side and tell him secretly what he had to tell him." Pomella insisted: "In my presence he never spoke of what he had to say to Cesare, but . . . sought him out two or three times, that he should at all cost find the said Marco Tullio and Olimpio." He then told of having observed that Guerra gave money to Cesare and supplied him with a horse, matters with which we are well acquainted.

The judge put to Pomella a question of some gravity: "How did you come to be present at such conversasations?"

"The first time," replied the other, "because Monsignor Guerra had sent for me; he wished to dispose of some hempen cloth which he had bought at the Farfa fair. And the second time . . . also I was summoned by him, because he wished to make a damask riding-cloak to go to Bagnaia;[1] and I recalled to Monsignore that I had made one the year before when he went to Celano, and that it should still be good. And he said, 'True, true!' And so he had it brought, and we looked at it, and I made some alterations to it."

All these details, naturally, were produced to lend a colour of truth to his tale. He had aided the Cenci and Monsignore by other crafts than the tailor's!

He had learned of the slaying of Olimpio, but "only as a common report throughout Rome," where people

[1] The famous villa of Cardinal Montalto, later Villa Lante, near Viterbo.

were saying that Cesare Bussone had done the deed and Guerra had ordered it. He later admitted that he had also heard the story "in the palace of Cardinal Montalto, for both the gentlemen and the other servants told of it."

Bussone was respited on September 27th to make provision for his own defence.

Meanwhile Marco Tullio and Pacifico, gentleman at large as they were, had no thought of renouncing their blood-money. They entered appeals at Chieti that the Marchese of Celenza, Viceroy of Abruzzo, should see fit to reward their noble enterprise! Unfortunately for them, the marchese died soon after. "I have sent many petitions to the Viceroy of Abruzzi, in the city of Chieti," asserted Marco Tullio, "and ever he said that he could do naught without writing to the Viceroy in Naples, so that he died before I had anything for my trouble."

Cesare Bussone wrote to the Court of Naples on October 22, 1599, or less than a month after he had been respited: "Cesare Bussone of Terni wishes to inform Your Excellency that he is imprisoned in Rome on the pretext that in past years he has slain in the Kingdom Olimpio Calvetti, Roman, a public outlaw and delinquent, sought by justice for brigandage and thefts on the public ways. And he, having produced an authentic attestation of the Marchese di Celenza, they have in Rome refused to admit it, on the pretext that an attestation is no evidence in law. Therefore he supplicates Your Excellency that he be pleased to command that an authentic copy of the trial be given him, without specification of the names of the accomplices, since it is to serve solely for the defence of the suppliant, and that he may not lose his life as his reward for having served the servants of Your Excellency."

The fate of the Cenci kept these prisoners in an agony of suspense, as if on the brink of an abyss!

Instead of receiving an answer, Bussone was sent to the galleys. There, his distress becoming unbearable, he

found means to beg his kinsman and brothers in pitiful terms to obtain his release, even if needful by renouncing their bounty. His release would also aid them to escape from their own troubles, and from passing all their lives in hiding or in flight, and in danger of falling into the hands of the Court of Rome.

The plea was received; on May 5, 1600, the petition was written which Marco Tullio and Pacifico, who had taken refuge in the Abruzzo mountains, carried to Naples. They arrived there about the 10th.

We reproduce the petition: "Marco Tullio Bartoli, Cesare and Pacifico Bussone of Terni, humble suppliants, remind Your Excellency that in May of the past year they put to death, by order of Captain Domenico Ant. De Sanctis, Commissioner for the Rural District of the Marchese of Celenza, at that time Commissioner General against the bandits, Olimpio Calvetti, public delinquent, highwayman, assassin and brigand, as appears from the trial existing in the Royal Tribunal of the countryside of Abruzzo, drawn up under date of December 4, 1598. Owing to the death of the Marchese they have never succeeded in obtaining the promised bounty, and worse, the aforesaid Cesare is in the galleys. He was consigned there in this case by the Tribunal of Rome for not having been able to demonstrate that Olimpio might have been slain with impunity, since your petitioner could not produce anything but an attestation of the aforesaid Marchese concerning the contents of the trial; and this they would not recognise, saying that an attestation is no proof.[1] Therefore Your Excellency is besought, since the suppliants have no need of pardon, not having committed any crime, that the matter of the bounty be dropped, *quatenus de jure* . . . and we renounce it *ex nunc*. But at least may the High Court of the Vicar recognise this case and declare whether the aforesaid Olimpio was rightfully slain or no, in order that this poor man may be liberated who, through having served this royal Court, now languishes unjustly in the galleys, and in order that these others

[1] "Fides non facit fidem."

may return to their homes in their native land without fear of having to meet there with constraints and hindrances through having served Your Excellency and done so praiseworthy a deed."

On May 13th the Court interrogated Pacifico Bussone. Immediately contradicting the generous proposal of renouncing the bounty, he began: "I am come here with Marco Tullio Bartoli, a fellow-townsman and kinsman of mine to present a petition to Your Excellency and to enjoy the rewards and bounties for the service which we did in slaying Olimpio Calvetti, outlaw of the Kingdom."

He then told how he had become Olimpio's "close friend"; he repeated with many details the whole story of the dealings between Olimpio, himself and his relatives of Terni and Piediluco; he described finally the journey to Cantalice and the death of the "bandit." If "they had brought him to be slain into the territory of the Kingdom," it was "because he was an outlaw in the Kingdom, and in the Kingdom there was a bounty on his head." However, like the honest fellow he was, he awarded the chief credit for the slaying to Marco Tullio. The latter, examined two days later, on May 15th, was even more diffuse than Pacifico upon all the facts with which we are familiar. Naturally there disappears from his tale any hint of the intervention of soldiers of the Kingdom assembled at Cantalice, an intervention upon which Cesare Bussone had insisted even under torture! Cesare, said the witness, had pretended, in accordance with his own plan, to be weary of walking; Olimpio halted the horse to take Cesare up behind; Pacifico took hold of the bit to prevent the horse and Olimpio from escaping; and when Olimpio bent over a moment, the valorous witness had struck him a blow on the head with a hatchet, but had not succeeded in killing him. The victim slipped to the ground, but was quickly dealt further blows; afterwards the witness had patiently sawed off the head "with a little knife!" He continued, telling what he had done afterwards in delivering the head to the ensign of Cittaducale, and indeed told all that he knew of Olimpio. He concluded, likewise contradicting

his own words with regard to the bounty: "I am come with my kinsman Pacifico Bussone expressly to ask the reward which is due to me of His Excellency, and to ask justice, for as I have done so important a service, it is not just that I should be molested wrongfully."

"But who molests you?"

"The Court of Rome is ever molesting us, as it has molested my kinsman Cesare, for in that tribunal they have no knowledge of the character of this Olimpio, as they have here."

The Court of Naples proceeded to a fresh investigation, but with the purpose of settling whether in fact Marco Tullio and the two Bussone deserved so well of the State as they boasted. The Court interrogated Cesare Venturini of Fiamignano, to whom his fellow-townsman, Marzio di Giovanni, had told the story of seeing Olimpio, castellan of La Petrella, among the banditti in an oak-grove not far from Pendenza. He also had learned that when the banditti had crossed the Cicolano, Olimpio had led them. He had, thereafter, been present at the passage of the banditti below Capradosso and had heard the episode of Taglieto, which we have narrated.

Giuliano di Marcantonio of Santa Lucia confirmed the story of Capradosso; he then related how, on being requested by the priest of Taglieto to do some tailoring, he had gone there and had found himself among the banditti. Among them was Olimpio, who, seeing his fright, had sought to reassure him; but he had seized his first opportunity to escape, and had not stopped for terror till he reached Rome.

The Court of Naples finally (June 9, 1600) asked Captain Domenico Antonio De Sanctis to send immediately "a first-hand declaration, or a copy thereof, concerning the death of said Olimpio and the delivery of his head"; he should obtain such a declaration through the Audienza of Cittaducale or from "any other Court or Tribunal whatsoever," and should forward it "closed and sealed as is proper."

The captain forwarded a copy of the letter sent with

utmost urgency on May 17, 1599, by the ensign Ottavio Muccino to Vincenzo Lopes di Borbona, bidding him repair immediately either to Micigliano or the Abbacy of San Quirico to identify the head of Olimpio; he sent a copy of the declarations dictated two days later in regard to this identification, by Donato Loppe of Popoli, known as Donatello, by Amico di Cesare di Rocca Casale (or I Casali), and by Liberatore, alias Combatello. These three were soldiers. The captain also sent the letter addressed to him by Muccino on May 25, 1599, in which Muccino informed him, from Tagliacozzo, of the dispersal of the banditti, the identification of the head and its final disposition, abandoned on a tree because it already stank. To these documents De Sanctis added others obtained from Messer Giacomo Valesio di Montereale, Governor of Cittaducale, such as the declarations made on May 18th, 1599, in the presence of Olimpio's body by Valerio di Giovan Battista and Francesco Antonio di Battista, both of Cantalice, and by Valerio di Giovanni Marco, public porter.

Olimpio's assassins, having thus repaired to Naples, "were dismissed with a decree of *licentiarentur*"; which means that the offence imputed to them was not a crime. But we do not know if the bounty was ever paid them. At any rate the Court of Rome held Cesare in the galleys of Civitavecchia, but for how long we do not know.

There are no further references to them in the Archives of the State of Rome, nor in those of Naples. Not even the *avvisi* again concern themselves with these wretches.

In many copies of the well-known *Relatione sulla morte di Giacomo e Beatrice Cenci, e di Lucrezia Petroni madrigna*, we read that on Tuesday, September 14th, or three days after the execution of the persons named, the Company of the Crucifix in San Marcello, taking advantage of the feast of the Exaltation of the True Cross, and by virtue of the Company's privilege, freed Bernardo Cenci from prison on Bernardo's pledge to pay 25,000 scudi to the Holy Trinity of Ponte Sisto. On this subject a Vat-

ican manuscript goes into the most minute particulars, and surprising and picturesque they are!

"When Tuesday, September 14th, came . . . at about the thirteenth hour several carriages containing great lords journeyed to the Prisons of Tordinona, with the Lord Deputies and the Heads of the Confraternity of the Holy Crucifix of San Marcello. And at the Chancellery they presented the Papal bull and the warrant for the release of Signor Bernardo, who coming straightway down was set in the carriage of my lord, Duke Sforza, and accompanied by the other carriages was borne to the Oratory of San Marcello; and there, after attending mass and performing his devotions, he was brought food and drink. And thence in a carriage accompanied by many lords he was brought to the Palazzo of Prince Colonna, where he was assigned a noble apartment and serving men; and after some days of repose that same Prince brought him to Paliano, and thence to Naples, and he returned to Rome in the Spring, so that what with the change of air and the journeying it seemed that the boy began to gain strength; and so masters were hired to instruct him in the sciences and render him well educated; whereat Signor Bernardo, possessing great parts and talent, in the second year, it was 1601, had already finished the philosophical course and also spoke French. Meanwhile the same Prince Colonna took the wardship of this excellent youth and paid 25,000 scudi to the Treasury and 25,000 to the Foundation of the Holy Trinity of Pilgrims, and this Prince with Duke Sforza administered the patrimony of Signor Bernardo Cenci until he should come to his majority. And as tales were spread about Rome, whether true or false, saying that the life of Signor Bernardo was threatened by secret enemies of the Cenci House, he was sent to Paris, to the Court of the King of France, as page of honour; and as he was much loved by the King and by every one for his beauty and his most excellent qualities, he was made Gentleman of the Chamber. . . . But declining in health he returned to Rome in 1604, where he made his testament and died on August 17th, 1605."

This entire tale, so rich in episodes, names, figures, dates, is a mere tissue of lies. We have chosen to reproduce it here that readers might have at least a sample of the manner in which the story of the Cenci has often been told.

Bernardo was not freed from prison and the galleys until several years after the execution of Giacomo, Beatrice, and Lucrezia; not conducted by any prince to any palace, nor taken on any happy journeys for his health's sake; he completed no "philosophical course"; he was never at any Court, in France or elsewhere; he never paid any sum to the Confraternity of the Crucifix, and he did not die on August 17, 1605, but full twenty-one years later!

The reader will soon learn what course the facts actually took. For ourselves we may note that even with clear evidence of the truth in our possession, we determined to investigate the Archives of the Confraternity of the Crucifix in order to discover if any attempt to liberate Bernardo had been made through its intervention, and if any other episode were on record that might have given rise to such a misunderstanding. But we found not a word, not a hint, in this regard.[1]

Bernardo Cenci, unmanned by the dreadful spectacle of the death of his nearest kin, which he had watched by the Pope's order, was led back to Tordinona and shut in his own room, if not in the "galley-dungeon" below. This dungeon was allotted to the lodging of those condemned to the triremes during the time intervening between their condemnation and their departure for the galley-prisons

[1] The Archives of the Confraternity of the Crucifix are intact, and therefore there is no reason to suspect that the information thus sought in vain may have been in lost records. Full records for the years of our history are preserved. How can we imagine that a pledge for such a personage and such a vast sum as 25,000 scudi should not have been noted in any record? But even such a sound observation as this is needless; for we know irrefutably that events took a very different course. Nevertheless some historians have believed the fable of the liberation. See Scolari: *Beatrice Cenci*, p. 127.

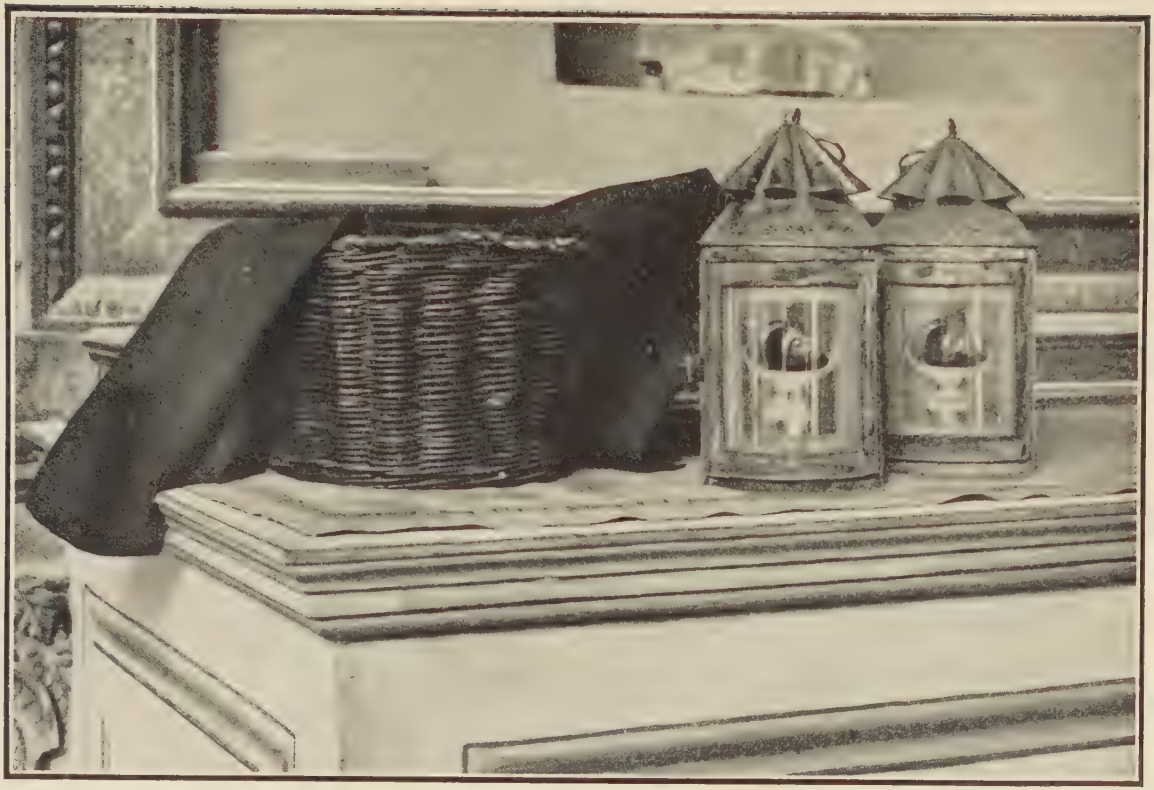
of Civitavecchia.[1] He remained there not more than nine or ten days; on or about the 20th he was transferred to the Castel Sant' Angelo.

As yet it was the common opinion that he would soon be pardoned, not only because he had already suffered overmuch, but also because the story was told on every side that his innocence had been proclaimed in the trial, and by Giacomo at the hour of death. In fact Rosati had deposed on August 7, 1599, or more than a month before the execution, that Olimpio, after declaring that he had slain Cenci by order of Beatrice, Giacomo, Lucrezia, and Bernardo, had hastened to add that Bernardo should not be included among the "instigators." And in substance this was true. He had never conceived the thought of doing away with Signor Francesco, nor had he "instigated" any one thereto; together with his dead brother Paolo he had merely been a passive witness to the conspiracy between his brother, Giacomo, and Olimpio, who had come to Rome bearing Beatrice's proposals.

In Giacomo's famous letter of August 25, 1599, to Cardinal Aldobrandino, which we have reproduced entire, he averred that Bernardo had not been even "cognisant" of it! He affirmed the boy's innocence in the terrible night of the 10th to the 11th; and he proclaimed it from the fatal scaffold, as was testified later by four Brothers of the Company of St. John the Beheaded. However, Giacomo went beyond the truth in thus declaring him at the last moment ignorant of everything; and his declaration was of no help to the boy he defended.

The declaration of the Brothers of Mercy was as follows: "We, the undersigned Brothers of the Venerable Company of St. John the Beheaded, called the Company of Mercy of the Florentine Nation, avouch: that in the month of September past of 1599, we being the deputed Brothers of said Company, and being on the night of the 11th of that month in the Court of Tordinona in our chapel, where were consigned to us the Signori Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci because they were to die the following

[1] See Cametti: *Tordinona*, p. 436.



The Lanterns, and the Baskets for the Head of the Condemned

morning in the course of justice, said Signor Giacomo declared several times in our presence for the discharge of his conscience that he had wrongfully accused and inculpated said Signor Bernardo, his younger brother, of being an accomplice in the planning of the death of Signor Francesco Cenci, their father, the truth being that therein Bernardo had no part at all, nor any reward. And when Giacomo was on the scaffold at the bridge at the very moment when he was to die, in our presence and in that of the people, he again said in a loud voice that he had inculpated Bernardo, his brother, in his examination, and he craved God's pardon therefor, and rendered to his brother his good repute, since he had made this accusation wrongfully and contrary to the truth. And as we have been sought after for the truth in this matter we have made this present, which will be subscribed by our hand and sealed with the customary seal of our company. This last day of July, 1600.

"*Locus + Sigilli Archiconfraternitatis Nationis Florentinae.*

"I, Camello Moretti, one of the deputed brothers, was present at all that is above and therefore have written and subscribed this present with my own hand.

"I, Francesco Vai, one of said brothers and lay-members, summoned to attest this document, was present at all the aforesaid matters and saw and heard and in good faith . . . this 2d of August, 1600.

"I, Sante Vannini, Overseer at that time, was present at all that stands above, and in good faith have I subscribed with my own hand this 2d of August, 1600.

"I, Gio. Aldobrandini, one of the aforesaid brothers and comforters, was present at all that stands above."

An *avviso* of the 11th, the very day of the execution, speaks of Bernardo, "saved through being a minor and not cognisant of the crime." Another *avviso*, three days later, added that at the death of his kin the poor boy had suffered far more pain than the others, and that "they say that he wished to become a Capuchin." And yet, "they say that his sentence was to be held a year in

perpetual (*sic*) imprisonment, and then to be sent to the galleys with the other penalties of shame and suffering." It was however hoped that "Cardinal Baronio would obtain a pardon from His Beatitude." Then on the 18th it was said with an air of certainty: "We hear that Cardinal Baronio has finally had from His Holiness the grace of Bernardo's liberation from prison and from the galleys." Yet the matter was soon again in doubt (September 22d): "The pardon for Bernardo is in fact not yet a certain thing." And Vialardo wrote, two days later: "Bernardo Cenci, poor boy, though his brother Giacomo's last act was to clear him utterly from blame, none the less is in a room in the Castello, with privilege of walking in the courtyard. He is resigned, and what with his years and his lack of wit and the calamities he has been obliged to bear, he stirs all men to pity." And again on October 1st: "Even though Bernardo Cenci was absolved of blame by Giacomo [1] when at the point of death, for the disburdening of his conscience, nevertheless Bernardo's sentence has been put into execution, and the property is in the hands of the courts."

On September 25th Bernardo had named Virginio Jacobino of Aquila his solicitor, renewing the appointments made on the 5th of that month by Giacomo. The solicitor was to essay to remove or revoke all sequestrations made in whatsoever manner or at the request of whatsoever person or court upon the castles of Assergi, Pescomaggiore, and Filetto; he was to essay to keep all money and chattels in security.[2] As we shall see later, Bernardo feared not only that the Treasury of Rome was preparing to sink its talons into that property; he also feared that his sister-in-law Lodovica was seeking to secure possession of it for her own children.

Vialardo was admirably informed of all that concerned Bernardo, for he had succeeded in visiting the prisoner. We find in the files of the Farnese series of the Archives

[1] The original reads "Bernardo," but the lapsus is evident.

[2] On Oct. 20, 1599, Bernardo named another solicitor, Vittorio Muccelloni.

of the State of Parma a letter from Bernardo (of October 2, 1599) to Duke Ranuccio Farnese. It begins: "Signor Francesco Maria Vialardo has shewn to me Your Highness's letter, in which Your Highness, being moved to compassion for my miserable [state], deigns to display his pity with most benignant effect."

Bernardo as well as Vialardo hoped much from the intervention of the Duke of Parma. Vialardo even believed for a moment that by such means young Cenci's liberty had been obtained; he wrote, on January 10th, 1600: "It is said that Parma [meaning Ranuccio] has secured the release of Bernardo Cenci, on condition that he go for some months to Naples, where his property has been restored to him, and where the sentence of Rome has been adjudged unjust, because the trial record states that when Beatrice was questioned *cur fecit ocidi patrem*,[1] she replied many things which . . . have not been written down; and the Tribunal of Naples believes the things not written down are those which do not favour the Treasury's contentions."

The statement is puzzling, but Vialardo insisted on it. He sent on March 18th the information: "The Bishop of Sagona [2] has obtained Bernardo Cenci's release from the castello, and from the prisons of the Camera."

It may well have been that Bernardo was removed from the prisons of the Camera; but certainly he was not released from the Castello; there he remained, as we shall see, until 1603.[3]

Meanwhile the city lost none of its passionate interest in him. We read in a book of the Company of the Stigmata, under March 2, 1600: "Signor Bernardo Cenci having shown himself so ready to help our Company, and

1 Why she had her father murdered.—*Trans.*

2 Giuseppe Godoni.

3 Tommaso of Corciano, sergeant in the Castello, wrote that there was due him "his pay for eleven months of guard-duty upon Signor Bernardo Cenci, up until the 7th day of February, 1601, during which time he was held by the Treasury and his income confiscated by it." There are also documents of July 6 and September 21, 1601, and of December 23, 1602, referring to Bernardo's stay in the Castello.

having already been so many months a prisoner, it was judged to be a just thing to send visitors to him, and to send him also a candle of a pound's weight, as a token of gratitude and also as a work of charity; and to this effect Signor Vincenzo Tavenario and Signor Ottavio Flavio were deputed to perform this charitable task of going to visit Signor Bernardo, bearing him the aforesaid candle, and expressing the readiness of our Company to aid him on every occasion."

And Vialardo—who can spare scarcely a glance for the Campo de' Fiori, for the flaming pyre and scorched flesh of the philosopher of Nola [1]—keeps his master constantly informed of the vicissitudes of Bernardo Cenci. He writes on April 15, 1600: "They say that on the day when Giov. Francesco Aldobrandino had the Viceroy to dine, he compounded for Bernardo, that he should pay 80,000 scudi, and be outlawed from Rome. I know not if this be true because Bernardo had promised me he would not give them money, but boys are timorous, and as for these others, etc." The "etc." is in the original; it surely does not lack eloquence!

In any case, it should be noted that the sum of 80,000 scudi proposed in the transaction corresponds to the sum which Lodovica agreed to pay about a year later.

Bernardo's appeals for pardon were frequent but vain. Vain also were those of his protectors, even in high places, as in the case of Ranuccio Farnese 1st. In the summer of 1600 Bernardo had, as we have seen, procured the declaration of the Brothers of St. John the Beheaded concerning all that Giacomo, at death's door, had said about his innocence. Then on August 10th he petitioned to be freed from prison and from the future penalty of the galleys.

On June 23, 1601, we have Vialardo's last communication to the Grand Duke: "The said Auditor, he of the Camera, wrote that Bernardo Cenci was *absolvendus*,[2] the Senator of Rome that he was *componendus*,[2] and Tosco,

[1] Giordano Bruno.—*Trans.*

[2] See footnote on opposite page.

without giving any reasons, that he was *condemnandus*."[1] And on July 6th Bernardo Sacchi, confessor of Bernardo Cenci, wrote the Grand Duke: "I believe that Your Most Serene Highness has well understood how the business of these poor Cenci has gone; therefore I shall not say more about what has already occurred. Our Master spared the life of a youth, a minor, Bernardo, who was the son of Francesco Cenci. And he has been kept in the Castello Sant' Angelo to this day. And as the Cardinal Montalto has mercifully granted that he be removed from the Castello and sent into exile, I, as confessor of this poor boy, do commend him to Your Most Serene Highness with the utmost humility, for he desires to come to live beneath your protection in your state, and to be your most humble and grateful servant, as have always been all of his house. He has made this decision to dwell in Siena, if only Your Highness shall accede to this his desire. . . ."

Notwithstanding Sacchi's affirmations, Bernardo was in fact still in the Castello in the last days of December, 1602; it was there that he was interrogated in the Guerra trial, and it was at that time that, on account of intrigues in his favour coming to light, he was consigned to the galleys of Civitavecchia.

The Cenci sentence had condemned Bernardo to a year of close confinement, *clausus et imuratus*, and thereafter to a life sentence pulling an oar in the galleys. But on the contrary he was held in prison, though not in the closest confinement, for more than three years, before passing to the second stage of his sentence.

Paruta gives us some interesting information about the harbour of Civitavecchia and the Papal navy during those very years.

The harbour of Civitavecchia—so he wrote in 1595—"has silted up greatly, and is rendered almost useless for the reception of large vessels or of a considerable fleet; yet it may still berth a certain number of vessels; and

[1] To be acquitted; to be released with fine; to be condemned.—*Trans.*

ordinarily the six galleys of the Church lie there." [1] And again: "The Church has six galleys, which are commonly sheltered in the haven of Civitavecchia, especially in winter, thereafter making various cruises as duty may lead them. Yet of these only five ordinarily carry guns; one serves as hospital at Civitavecchia. . . . They have a hundred and seventy rowers to each galley; but the flagship has three hundred, and these are for the most part criminals, though a part also are slaves." [2]

Bernardo's new punishment proved to be of indescribable hardship. In that filthy harbour, where the stagnant waters reeked with filth and miasmas, he, a noble, was herded with a throng of slaves and delinquents of base aspect and habits. Unaccustomed to physical toil, he was forced to sweat at his oar, obedient to the captain's shout, and cursed and abused at every failure of his strength. Clapped at night into the hold, nauseous with human effluvia and alive with vermin, he felt outraged in body, senses, dignity and pride. Preferring his prison a thousand times, he often obtained, in answer to his pleas, the privilege of being confined within the mighty bastions erected by Antonio of Sangallo.

We possess some of Bernardo's appeals to the Pope. In one he says: "Finding that he has arrived at the lowest depth of miseries and calamities, all of which he receives at the hand of Our Lord God as penance for his sins, he humbly has recourse to the most Holy Feet of Your Holiness as the fountain of clemency and benignity, and begs that he be granted the grace of a commutation of the penalty of the galleys into a banishment or exile outside the States of the Church or elsewhere as may seem good to Your Holiness." In another: "Bernardo Cenci, most devoted petitioner of Your Holiness, having again fallen ill in the flagship at the dockyards of Civitavecchia, and being in danger of his life as this is a place of dead

[1] *Op. cit.* II, p. 486. Cf. Alberto Guglielmotti: *Storia della marina pontificia,* vol. VII: *La squadra permanente,* 1573-1644 (Rome, 1892).

[2] *Op. cit.,* II, p. 486.

water and pestiferous air, so that even the fishes die there, humbly supplicates Your Holiness by the love of God to be pleased to have him returned to the fortress where he was before, until he be cured."

Clement VIII had himself been to the fortress of Civitavecchia, but he had gone to the fine apartment at the side of the Molo del Bicchiere, and had wasted no time in visits to the ships' holds and the prisons. He arrived there in the midst of a throng of Cardinals, courtiers, buffoons, servants, Swiss guards, to receive the plaudits of the "baser folk" and the reverences of the "better folk." He had been received with sumptuous banquets, solemn functions, salvos of artillery, excursions along the shore and on the sea, fireworks, illuminations, and manœuvres of the galleys. The recorder of the journey goes into profuse and vivid detail; he relates how "Trulla, the buffoon, was caught, put in chains and shaven; he was passed up on the hands of the slaves from poop to prow and from prow to poop and carried back to his place. This gave great pleasure to the bystanders." [1] A strange pleasure, in which the laughter of courtiers mingled with that of wretches condemned to pull at an oar until death should release them.

Bernardo's pleas came to the Pope at a bad moment. The heavy burdens of government, his preoccupations, of which the Cenci affair was not the least, had weakened Clement in mind and body. He was assailed at this time by fiercer and more frequent attacks of gout; the last of which, very violent in character, confined him to his bed and caused his death on February 10th, 1605. Muratori wrote that he left "a great name not less for his zeal in his pastoral charge than for his severity and attention to the Civil government." But, he continues, "he left also his nephews and grand-nephews in great felicity, with illustrious connections, and lucrative posts, and sumptuous

1 Orbaan: *Un viaggio di Clemente VIII nel Viterbese*, in the *Arch. della Soc. Rom. di Storia Patria*, XXXVI (Rome, 1913), pp. 113, et seq., and *Documenti sul Barocco*, pp. 481-484; Alb. Guglielmotti: *Storia della marina pontificia, cit.*, VII, pp. 125-131.

dwellings. Three of them were adorned with the sacred Purple. But it seems that God, whose ways are very secret, would not let his race take root; so that, as Cardinal Bentivoglio wrote, some years later, crying marvel, 'Pope Clement died, Cardinal Aldobrandino died (after suffering distressful misadventures under Paul V); the five nephews, who counted two other Cardinals among them, are dead; all the males of that house are dead; and thus finally all succession failed and with it all greatness of their blood.'"[1]

It is at least certain that after the death of Clement VIII and Leo XI (Alessandro de' Medici, whose pontificate lasted twenty-two days), and after the election of Camillo Borghese, who took the title of Paul V (May 16, 1605), the fortunes of all the promoters of the Cenci trial declined. The cause was not so much the moral disapprobation of the new pontiff as his perception that the condemnation of the Cenci was still a sore subject to the people—and he was a lover of popularity. In May, 1606, when Cardinal Aldobrandino was offended because some one had served a summons on him as he was about to step into his carriage, it was written: "He does not realise that his day is past!"

Ferdinando Taverna had, it is true, the joy of being made Cardinal on June 9, 1604. (He had swooned at

[1] *Annali d'Italia*, XI, p. 14. See Bentivoglio, *op. cit.*, V, p. 64. The anonymous author of the *Relatione istorica del fine tragico della nobilissima Famiglia Cenci Romana*, in the Vatican secret archives (referred to on p. 701), amplifies Bentivoglio's words with inventions: "Besides that within six months after the Cenci were punished all the prelates, judges, and notaries who had part in the condemnation died, including also the Governor of Rome, it should be observed that five days after the sentence was executed Mastro Alessandro, the headsman, sickened and died after thirteen days of illness, saying ever that it had done him much hurt and pain to have executed the Cenci, and he confessed to great shuddering in tearing and slaying poor Giacomo. Mastro Peppe, the headsman's aid, happening to be gaming toward the end of October and falling into a dispute with his fellows in the play, received two knife-thrusts, whence he died before Porta Castello without even the presence of a priest. Thus a month and a half after the Cenci were put to death, both their executioners were likewise dead."

the news.[1]) He had also had the good fortune to retire into the shady recesses of the villa he had just erected at Frascati; he sold it in 1614 to Cardinal Borghese, nephew of Paul V.[2] But nevertheless he saw no decrease in the hatred felt for him by nobility and populace and finally removed still farther from Rome. He was sent to the government of the Marches, and again to his bishopric of Novara. He died in 1619.

On July 16, 1605, Benedetto Ala, the new Governor of Rome, named Anteo Claudio as his representative in the case between Bernardo Cenci and Pompeo Molella, with all necessary powers. This action was taken at the instance of Silla Morico, Bernardo's solicitor.

On December 2d Bernardo, by means of the notary, Recio Cambio, again protested against being unjustly condemned. On the 5th Claudio's sentence was promulgated. Bernardo was freed from the galleys, but was bound to leave Rome and the Papal State immediately, and repair to a place to be chosen by Benedetto Ala, Governor of Rome. By a new refinement of cruelty the governor shelved this sentence until Pompeo Molella should give him more information. Bernardo, in agony, wrote again on February 17, 1606, bemoaning the fact that Molella persisted in adducing fresh allegations against him, among them his exclamation: "The devil sent us that Olimpio here to Rome." "I would swear I did not say it, indeed I swear and declare with all fervour that said Prosecutor together with Ulisse Moscato have done this wantonly and without my word or consent; and when they examined me they menaced me, and swayed me as they willed, for as they had made me abide seven months alone and in solitary, I was brought very low, and besides they had not given me any guardian nor overseer as Giusto

1 Novaes: *Elem. della Storia dei Pontefici*, IX, p. 73.

2 Dom. Seghetti: *Frascati* (Frascati, 1907), pp. 279-280. Through error some have stated that the villa of Mondragone was erected by Taverna. See Moroni, LXXIII, p. 21.

ordered. Moreover, the Prosecutor alleges that my confession is corroborated by said Giacomo, my brother, and to that I say that by him also it was annulled by his exculpation." Here an opportune Latin quotation reveals that the letter was written for Bernardo by an advocate: its bold, accusing spirit also is proof that the will and support of Clement VIII no longer stood behind the judges.

On March 10th an extract from the whole bulk of the great trial was transmitted to the Governor "under ten heads."[1] From this it appeared in substance that even if Bernardo was cognisant of Olimpio's pacts with Beatrice and Giacomo, and of the preparations for his father's murder, he still had had no active share in anything. Following this, the sentence was pronounced which freed him from the galleys and sent him into exile. The sentence was communicated to him at Civitavecchia on the evening of the 20th by the notary of the galleys. It contained the order that he should leave that city within twenty days and go to Siena. Bernardo said in the letter which he straightway wrote to the Governor: "I shall not fail to observe this as far as I can, but again plead that you be pleased to show me favour on all my lawful occasions, and in particular that you revoke this decision and permit me to return to my home, where to-day there is very great need of my presence."

That Bernardo's health had suffered grievously in the cruel life of the galleys is indicated by the fact that he could not leave immediately. He availed himself of the limit permitted, and remained two weeks in Civitavecchia "to re-establish his health a little."

On April 2, 1606, a Sunday, he set out for Siena; he arrived three days later. On the 9th he wrote to the Governor, saying that he would not stir from there without his order: "I do not send any authentication of my being here, for I have not yet any acquaintanceship with any one and know not to whom to betake myself. But I shall send this attestation by the first post, that Your

[1] "In decem destincta capita."

Illustrious Highness may see that I am obedient. And while I am here I must needs seek to study how I may obtain some provision of money; and therein I recur to the favour of Your Illustrious Highness that you may not let me lack; and of the 200 scudi sent me by Signor Angelo I have spent much, as Your Illustrious Highness will perceive in a list which I shall send together with the attestation." These obsequious assurances did not prevent him from making some excursions. We know in fact that once he pushed them as far as Pisa, where he saw the Grand Duke and asked leave to pay his compliments.

We come now to another black page in the story of the Cenci. It was Bernardo's intention to gain absolute possession of the castles of Assergi, Pescomaggiore, and Filetto. This plan did not commend itself to Lodovica; as mother and guardian of Giacomo's children, she looked askance at Bernardo's approach to complete freedom. By the counsel of her far from scrupulous lawyers, she went so far as to busy herself with the Court of Naples for reopening the trial against Bernardo Cenci, whether because those castles were situated in the kingdom or because the murder of Francesco Cenci had been committed in the Kingdom. She hoped that her brother-in-law would be sent back to prison!

It seemed that the tidal wave of tragedy which had submerged first Rocco, then Cristoforo, and Francesco, Giacomo, Beatrice and Lucrezia did not yet suffice! The two survivors who had escaped the wreck, far from joining forces for their common salvation sought each to strangle the other. One may well repeat Pomella's words: "Such is the breed! Can I help it?"

Bernardo wrote from Siena to Paul V "that, the case having been terminated in due course of justice in Rome, where is situate the supreme tribunal of the world with the participation of Your Holiness and under Its orders, it is not fitting that his trial should be transferred to Naples at the instigation of his ill-wishers; for they wish to harass him anew in that Court. Wherefore your poor

petitioner, having suffered seven years of punishment, imprisonment, galley-slavery and other ignominious penalties, humbly begs your Holiness to be pleased to bid Monsignore Cobelluccio, new Secretary of the Briefs, to send him a Writ of Acquittal, restoring him to his country, honours and good repute [1] and to the status and condition which he was in before his condemnation."

And later: "The adverse party does not desire to have the trial-record in order to give information to the Segnatura [2] for it has enough now in its hands to give all the information it can want; but it craves the record on this pretext, that it may send it to Naples to intrigue against the life of the unhappy petitioner, as has been related at other times."

And again: "Bernardo Cenci humbly exposes that the Viceroy of Naples has written or is about to write to the Ambassador of the Catholic King in Rome that he may instantly request of Your Holiness the trial-record made in the Vicar's Tribunal, to send it to Naples to torment the poor petitioner anew. And all this arises from naught but the persecution and malignity of his kinswoman, wife of his brother, Giacomo, who takes it ill that the petitioner be put in possession of his castles in the Kingdom; and she keeps an agent in Naples paid for this purpose, to work against the life of the poor petitioner and his rights."

But his troubles seemed to grow more numerous with time. Being so far from Rome and Naples, in which cities people were busily working to his hurt, he was unable to attend to his own interests. He pleaded therefore that he be allowed to come for a few days to Rome. Giovanni Antonio Orsini, on November 5, 1606, gave assurance that Bernardo would live "quietly and in peace and also would appear at every mandate and order of Monsignore, the Governor of Rome, and if aught else should occur he promises to make whatever observance behooves an honourable knight."

[1] "Ad patriam famam et honorem."

[2] The high court of appeals in Rome.—*Trans.*

Urged by the necessity of warding off a new trial and a new imprisonment, Bernardo had meanwhile gone from Siena to Naples, having taken ship at Leghorn. He writes from Naples on November 10th to Cardinal Scipione Borghese that the Viceroy had persuaded the Spanish Ambassador in Rome to attempt to obtain from the Pope the transmission of the trial-record to the Vicaria.[1] Let Cardinal Borghese bestir himself most charitably to prevent this, and let him observe that "the last Viceroy, who was Count Olivares," had on the contrary consented that the trial should be held in Rome; whereas, if the trial should be put in the hands of the Vicaria, Bernardo would have time to die a hundred times before it was over, as in that court they never bring a case to an end without making the accused "first bide six or seven years in prison." Two weeks later, on November 24th, he wrote at greater length to the Governor of Rome, returning to the subject of the trial and again bemoaning his extreme poverty: "I append my old and accustomed complaint of being unable to get money to maintain myself, much less to push a lawsuit; since I left much of the two-hundred scudi which were given me when I came out of the galleys—and that was nine months ago—to pay debts I had incurred; and then I made the journey to Siena, and thence to Livorno, and from Livorno to Naples. And in Naples it is needful that I dwell in a lodging-house and keep a servant for my clothes and other necessary tasks, in addition to the expenses of the lawsuit. And yet these representations avail me nothing. I have also contracted debts here to the sum of fifty ducats and I shall have to go to an almshouse, for if Your Most Illustrious Lordship do not provide for me I must do so, despite the protests my kinswoman makes saying that she dies of hunger and has naught. But I tell Your Most Illustrious Lordship that it is I who die of hunger, and that I justly complain because I see her enjoy what is mine and I must stand by and see this. And if she say that she is in want she is not to be credited, for she has still so many estates and palaces that they return to

1 The high court of the Kingdom of Naples.—*Trans.*

her nigh to eight thousand scudi a year and I know this very well. But how does she expend them? Does she put them out at interest? No, Most Illustrious Monsignore, she uses them to enrich her brother, and to maintain lawyers in Naples to attack my life, by getting letters presented to the Chief Prosecutor as I have said above and by labouring to bring the trial-record from Rome, in order that, since that she cannot rob me of the castles by having them seized *tamquam indignis*,[1] she may procure my death in the Vicaria, where cases are never expedited for him who has neither money nor influence; and Your Most Illustrious Highness may well believe that I have neither one nor the other on my side." [2]

He continues with a prayer that money be sent him. It is edifying to see how he repays Lodovica in kind, accusing her even of robbing her own children of money to give it to her brother. In addition, he writes to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, asking pardon if his preoccupations concerning the one who had "thirsted after his blood, his property, and his honour" had prevented him from displaying fitting attentions toward the Grand Duke, who had been so kind and humane toward him at Pisa, and who could still render him service by affording him his protection. In fact, let the Grand Duke refer to Monsignore Giusto for a recognition of Bernardo's rights, and let him not forget that Francesco in his will had disinherited Giacomo and had named Bernardo his heir. Let the Grand Duke therefore make it possible for him "to recover his honour and the wealth unrightfully reft from him."

Lodovica meanwhile presented to the Pope a new and savage petition against Bernardo: "Lodovica Velli de' Cenci, mother, guardian and overseer of the children of the late Giacomo Cenci . . . exposes that when a short time since there was question of freeing Bernardo Cenci from the galleys and exiling him, she held her peace, as she did not believe him athirst for the blood of his kin, as in fact he is. But now that the project is afoot, and sup-

[1] As from unworthy persons.—*Trans.*
[2] Gori erroneously dates this letter as of 1600.

ported by the most powerful patronage, to restore him to the house where the petitioner dwells with her small sons and daughters, and to invest him with the property of which he was rightfully deprived, and to bind the children's hands by denying them access to the records which may inure to their advantage in defence, she is therefore obliged as their mother to call upon His Holiness. And this she does that, as the just and pious Father of all, and particularly of all wards, he may be pleased to command Monsignore the Governor of Rome to refuse permission to said Bernardo to come and live in the house where dwells the petitioner with her small sons and daughters; for, besides that it would be a continual spectacle to reawaken the memory of the old wounds of this unhappy house, who can be in security from a youth who did not pardon his own father, that he will not by deeds, words, and evil examples do the same to the petitioner and her children? And in addition is the inconvenience of litigants dwelling together, since lawsuits are things that bring hatred of themselves."

The petition then went into diffuse detail in its claim for "money and goods," contesting "the vain pretentions which Bernardo claims to hold"; but it was fruitless, for in 1607 Moscato's sentence was definitely revoked, and Bernardo's ban of exile was removed. Yet he continued to whimper wretchedly all his life. As soon as he returned to Rome he despatched more pleas and supplications. He wrote to the Pope imploring aid in money, that he might continue his suit and "dress suitably, since he was very destitute and for four months had lived at the cost and in the house of his friend Agnelo Coleini." [1] He asked to be given the six months "rental due on the Palazzo at La Dogana, occupied by the Ambassador of Savoy; it comes to about the sum of two hundred scudi."

His lack of money led him into various shady courses. We find a plea, of 1609, addressed to the Most Illustrious and Excellent Signore Gio. Battista Borghese. It is drawn up by Silla Morico of Fermo, who had acted as

[1] Angelo Calcina?

solicitor for six years continuously "for Signor Bernardo Cenci with all diligence and solicitude, in such wise that he got him freed from the galleys . . . and brought for Bernardo a civil suit in the Rota for the paternal property." He calls for justice, "seeing that Signor Bernardo pays him with ingratitude, giving him to understand that if the petitioner makes any move Signor Bernardo will do his worst by making reprisals upon some goods of the petitioner's in his possession; and what is worse he has taken by stealth even as much as 60 scudi without thought of satisfying the petitioner in any degree." But an indorsement on the back of the plea says simply: "*Bernardinus Cincius non habet unde solvere possit.*" [1]

On August 3, 1614, Bernardo married Clizia, daughter of that Cesare Cenci who had taken such a noteworthy and equivocal part in the trial.[2] He had by her four daughters and three sons.[3] Two of his daughters bore the names of his mother Ersilia and his sister Beatrice; two of his sons bore the names of his father, Francesco, and his brother, Paolo; but the third son did not perpetuate the name either of Giacomo, Cristoforo, or Rocco, Bernardo's slain brothers! He made his will on March 20, 1626, and added a codicil; he died the following day.

Lodovica Velli, widow of Giacomo Cenci, was already dead of a stroke of apoplexy in her forty-fifth year, on or after November 9, 1615. The suits between her children and Bernardo had not reached their term; they continued even for some months after the latter's death. The "settlement" was not reached until 1626. It was proposed in January, ratified on October 7th, and approved by Urban VIII on November 6th.

[1] Bernardo Cenci has nothing wherewith he can pay.—*Trans.*

[2] This marriage had been arranged in the previous July. See Orbaan: *Documenti sul Barocco*, p. 223.

[3] We have not the dates of birth or baptism of Maria Maddalena and Francesco. Of the others, Ersilia was born May 1, 1615; Beatrice, May 17, 1616; Michele Bernardo, May 8, 1619; Anna Maria, Jan. 1, 1622; Paolo, Mar. 17, 1623.

CHAPTER XXXI

MONSIGNORE GUERRA

We have now once more to deal with the sinister figure of Mario Guerra, who, for all his clerical garb, had been the companion of the young Cenci in their mischievous midnight forays, Rocco's accomplice in the robbery in Signor Francesco's house, and the pitiless brain behind Olimpio's murder.

We left him at Celano, whither he had repaired in July, 1599. The news of his departure from Rome became known, and it was thought that it might aid the case of the Cenci.

But an *avviso* of August 14th, after saying that the case was drawing rapidly to its climax, continued: "Monsignore Guerra, who had withdrawn from Rome under colour of paying a visit in the State of Celano, must be held to be charged with some other matter; and they say it is with having taken money to get Olimpio murdered; and therefore a summons was posted yesterday morning for his appearance; it being understood that Our Master wishes him a prisoner at all costs; and his disgrace, if he shall let himself be taken."

On the same day Vialardo wrote to the Grand Duke: "Guerra, auditor of Montalto, has departed, as Your Highness has no doubt heard in connection with the Cenci matter; and their case has been hastened on account of the murder of Olimpio." And again on the 21st the informant of Urbino wrote: "Monsignor Guerra, whose name has been posted, may come into the hands of the courts, so many think, on the charge of having procured the slaying of Olimpio, assassin of Signor Francesco Cenci, besides which his property will be confiscated."

The influence of Cardinal Montalto in favour of Guerra

was henceforth of no avail upon the mind of Clement VIII!

The tragic conclusion of the Cenci trial and the executions did not prevent Moscato from thinking of Guerra. Hardly four days later (September 15th), Moscato cited him for contumacy, sending the writ to Celano. Then on the 18th he summoned Orazio Pomella to his house and questioned him, in order to determine more exactly Bussone's responsibility and also that of Guerra. At this moment, while Guerra was a fugitive from justice, his mother died. As we know, she was Lucrezia Arias, sister of Francesco Cenci's mother and widow of Stefano Guerra. She made her will on October 20, 1599, leaving legacies to her daughters, among whom were two nuns in Santa Marta; she named as heir her son Tommaso, with the obligation to give half his inheritance to his brother, Mario, when the latter should return to the good graces of His Holiness.[1]

Guerra remained in Celano eight or nine months, and from there descended to Naples some time in the month of March, 1600; here he passed the whole summer. He next embarked on the Maltese galleys, and repaired to Orbetello and Porto Ercole, Spanish strongholds in Tuscany, subject to Naples; he passed the winter there, and at the end of Spring returned again to Naples. There he remained for the summer of 1601, but when the cold season began, he again passed to Porto Ercole on one of the galleys of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and later, perhaps at the first hint of fever, or merely from habitual restlessness, sailed once more to Naples. The Roman courts had made a search for him, but, as usual, in vain. On December 4, 1602, however, the following anonymous

[1] These children: Mario, Tommasso, Vittoria, Cecchina, and Perpetua, the last two nuns in Santa Marta, were named in Lucrezia's will. In the will of Beatrice Arias of Sept. 29, 1573, Pietro Paolo and Venere are also named. These two do not appear in their mother's dispositions; but the first perhaps was dead in 1599, and the second may have entered a nunnery under the name of Perpetua or Francesca. In the Trial of Guerra a certain Annibale is several times recorded as a first cousin of Mario. We find him mentioned also in a writ of procuration of Bernardo Cenci.

letter was addressed to Clement VIII: "Your Holiness is informed that Monsignor Guerra, outlawed on a capital charge for the assassination committed on the person of Francesco Cenci, is in Naples and dwells behind the Carità in the lodging which has for its sign a golden lion; and he converses continually in the house of Nicolò and of Carlo d'Oria at Pizzofalcone, to the great contempt of God, Your Holiness, and justice. And he boasts of being in that city in despite of the Pope and the whole Aldobrandine House, vilifying it with so much indecency that worse could not be said of the greatest tyrants in the world. If Your Holiness will give an order to the Nunzio or to the Archbishop that he be gaoled and returned to Rome, he will find that the said assassination was committed by his arrangement, consultation, and invention for a cause repugnant to God and man. He conducts a correspondence with the son of the Cenci incarcerated in Tordinona, to whom he writes and from whom he receives responses, using the name of Abbate Antonio Scardafa. If Your Holiness wills that he be imprisoned, let him give a precise order, but taking heed that the Nunzio's prosecutor is the man's friend. This information is given through zeal for the reputation of that most happy Pontificate, that it may never be said that it so acted as to leave unpunished a delinquent who has been the cause of so much evil. This is sent by a most affectionate and obliged servant of the Aldobrandine House, moved solely by the mockery and evil-speaking which he has heard."

The letter gave exact indications as to the place where Mario Guerra, perhaps too openly for prudence, was lodging. Clement VIII issued what were positively savage orders to his men. They made immediate provision for the monsignore's capture; it took place on December 17th. It was Michele Mataresio of Procida, master of the felucca owned by Girolamo de Bicola, Neopolitan, who brought Guerra to Rome. He deposed, on December 21, 1602, in Tordinona, where the trial had been initiated: "Last Wednesday night between the fifth and sixth hours

I was sent for by Monsignor the Nunzio of Naples, and he delivered to me a prisoner who looked to me like an abbate; and he told me that I should straightway set forth and put to sea more than thirty miles. And he also gave me a writ, declaring that as I was on the Pope's business every aid and favour should be rendered me. So this prisoner was consigned to me, shackled with three sets of irons, and that guard who took him came with me to the Marina, for he wished to see me set sail; and he returned back and I sailed away, and on Thursday I arrived off Terracina, and on Thursday evening I came off the Roman shore, and I passed into the river at midnight. And I had seven sailors without any other guard of the prisoner except myself and these sailors; and this morning we came to Ripa with the prisoner Monsignor Guerra; he is a blond man and fleshy. There the Chief Constable came and put him in a carriage and brought him here, but I first brought letters from Monsignore the Nunzio to Monsignore the Governor; and also the said constable put me too in prison, but I know not for what reason he put me in prison." The skipper went on to state that when Guerra had arrived in Rome, before any one had left the felucca, he had written on a sheet of paper and had asked him to take the message to his first cousin Annibale or to Monsignore Crescenzio. And this the sailor had done, without suspicion, so he declared. But Monsignore Crescenzio had said to him: "What help can I give him? Let him help himself."

The judge, Giovan Battista Gottarello, censured this act of the shipmaster; the latter excused himself by asserting, among other things, that he did not know what Guerra had written, being unable to read, and that he had not received any compensation for his errand. "It indeed seems to me that he gave to my sailor, named Gio. Salvo, a watch, which is round; and I do not know if he gave him money besides. And it seems to me, if I understood aright, that he gave something for the coach; this I know well, that there was a black cloak in the felucca,

which belonged to Monsignor Guerra, and the Constable took it."

On the 22d Guerra was examined. He proved ready enough in finding baffling answers; he was a master of legal formulas, which he had learned in his quality as Official Referee, and rattled them off in brisk competition with the judge.

He was shown the sentence for contumacy issued against him on September 15, 1599, and was asked if he was the Mario Guerra therein cited. He replied: "I am . . . the one who received the writ for the matters contained in the sentence, but I received it in Celano and did not receive it in Rome." He continued: "I was not the one who procured and participated in Olimpio's death, and besides I shall show, if I have time, that the aforesaid Olimpio was outlawed *et poterat impune occidi*,[1] and was killed by order of the Royal Commissioner and the Viceroy of Abruzzo." In proof, he had been able to obtain "a copy of the trials and judgments against the said Olimpio . . . by agency of the Most Illustrious Signor Cardinal Montalto [2] when he was recently in Naples."

He spoke of his movements after leaving Rome, and recounted his journeys to Tivoli, Celano, Naples, and Port' Ercole.

"I did not treat with any man because no one wished to treat with me. I once wrote a letter to the advocate Guazzino [3] and he would not receive it, but made a show of bluster to the man who carried it to him. I wrote one letter to the Prosecutor here present, and I wrote three letters to Ulisse Moscato."

It was Cesare Silverio di Celano who had kept him informed of what was being contrived in Rome against him: "Once he wrote me that my mill-stone had been sold; another time he told me that they had taken my house; another time he told me that they had taken some

[1] And might be slain with impunity.—*Trans.*

[2] Who would believe that Bertolotti (p. 164) here resolves the abbreviation M.alto (for Montalto) into Malta, thus creating a Cardinal of Malta?

[3] Sebastiano Guazzino, jurist.

money of mine from the bank.[1] It was the court and the Camera that did this, for it was asserted that I had brought to pass Olimpio Calvetti's death to free the Cenci from the molestations they suffered and to hide the crime they had done."

The following day the judge went to the Castello, where Bernardo was in durance vile, and questioned him. "No one has come to my room," Bernardo replied, "for the last fortnight, save only my servant and some soldiers, to converse likewise, and my nurse and my teacher who read me the *Instituta;* and I recall none other. My nurse came to bring me the shirts she had washed for me." He continued: "Since I have been here I have received letters, but I do not recall exactly how many times. I know well that [the letters] came by the post, for I sent my servant named Giacomo for them; he is the man I have with me." He had received some from a certain Mario, assistant in the Camera of Cardinal Sauli, from his confessor Bernardino Sacchi of Russi in Romagna, and some "from Messer Fulgenzio Cotta; these came from Naples; he went there to make solicitations on account of certain castles, Assergi and Filetto, which were formerly ours."

Then, searching his memory, he added: "I think that Signor Ippolito Rovarelli also wrote me; I know not if he be of Forli or Rimini. . . ."

Roverella was a kinsman of Bernardo's, for he had married a Santacroce, cousin of his mother. He had discussed with Bernardo certain arms or heraldic emblems of cities, and nothing else. Three or four days ago . . . on St. Thomas's day [December 21st] the Lord Prosecutor came here with various people, and there was one who had a pen behind his ear, thereby showing he was a notary; and they took the papers in my little work-room . . . and carried them off." There were among other things some petitions of the three Cencis, Bernardo's "exculpation," made by his brother Giacomo, "the Mirandola with pictures," certain records of his own, various letters and records of consultations, the report of

[1] In 1602 the Camera paid Guerra's creditors out of his funds.

"the death" of Signor Troilo Savello," and "a sheet which began: *Capita processus*, which was about the Cardinal Caraffa who was strangled in the Castello."

The judge laid some stress on this item, for the recording of that terrible deed suggested that some blame was being cast on the memory of Pius IV. "It seemed to me a dreadful thing that the Cardinal had done . . . and on the other hand it seemed to me also a dreadful thing that a Cardinal should be put to death, and I kept it so as to be able to recount the events and for no other purpose. . . . It told how this Cardinal had brought the French army into Italy, how he had falsified letters of the Emperor, and how he had had assassinated some one of the Massimi and put the guilt on Marcantonio Colonna."

The sheet was shown to Bernardo; he recognised it, and added: "I tell you that I got it among the papers which my brother [Giacomo] had in Tordinona, and as for me, I think it was among the papers of my father."

The judge then returned to Roverella's letters, one of which (of October 22, 1602, from Sorivoli) contained this sentence: "I have seen to all that is desired for the friend's service; I shall not fail to so act that you will be well served." Was that "friend" perhaps Guerra? The judge had such a suspicion, but Bernardo sought to confuse him: "I tell you that what he says: 'and I shall see to doing a service to the friend and to sending as soon as may be,' refers to those armorial bearings which my friend wished, for I had promised to make a book of the arms of the cities to pass the time away, as there is none such."

The watch, a valuable thing in those days, given by Guerra to the sailor Giovan Salvo, was then surrendered by the sailor "into the hand of Signor Delio." But when this was learned by "Filippo Filippone of the Fiorentella Monastery, employed by the Chief Constable of Rome," who had been Guerra's guard for three months and ten days, he promptly asked to be paid out of the proceeds of the watch. Then to Filippone's petition was added one by his companion, Giacomo Mozzo. The Governor

Taverna indorsed it: *Cogatur D. Guerra ad satisfactionem;* [1] but Guerra asserted that "he no longer possessed anything, for the little he had had been taken from him by the Camera."

On December 29, 1603, Mario Guerra was admonished to provide for his own defence. The following day he informed his cousin Annibale of the fact.

In the summer of 1605 he was still in the Tordinona prisons. He wrote from there to the Pope, now no longer the inexorable Clement VIII, but Paul V. "A little less than three years since, the most devoted petitioner of Your Holiness, Mario Guerra, was taken in Naples, having been condemned in contumacy here in Rome for having brought about the slaying of Olimpio Calvetti, the assassin, who had murdered Francesco Cenci for money; so runs the sentence literally. And even though this were true, as it is not, it did not merit any punishment, it being notorious *in jure* that an assassin may be slain, or his slaying may be brought about, without any penalty. Therefore Pope Clement, to whom be glory, having considered that the said sentence was notoriously iniquitous and unjust, resolved that in no manner should it be put into execution; yet without making any other provision they have kept your petitioner until the present hour a prisoner. Therefore he supplicates Your Holiness to deign to be moved to compassion for such great sufferings and to order Monsignore the Governor to settle his case in accordance with justice." [2]

Two other petitions succeeded this one; the later of the two was of September, 1605.[3]

Finally on October 11th his prison was changed to exile, first for three years, on the island of Malta, then wherever the Pope might designate, with a bond of 1,000

[1] Let Signor Guerra be forced to satisfy the request.

[2] Bertolotti (p. 169) gives this document the date of 1603; but the words with which it begins are sufficient to place it in the autumn of 1605. One may then add that Bertolotti himself took it from the file for 1605!

[3] It states: "33 months have gone by while this case has been pending, etc."

scudi against disobedience. He sought to reduce this sum by half, in order that, as he could not deposit so much money, he might the more easily find a guarantor. His efforts were futile; it was only by the intervention of Cardinal Montalto, always pitiful toward his old secretary, that the Genoese banker, Ottavio Costa, went his bond for 1,000 scudi, and he was liberated from prison. Costa guaranteed that Guerra would remain in exile for three continuous years, on the island of Malta, and that then he would hold himself at the disposition of the Pope.

Thus Monsignore departed for his place of exile. But a few weeks later he began to plead to return to Rome, "six years having passed during which . . . he has endured and still endures unrightfully all the travails and miseries that humanly can be endured in this life." And since he has learned that some one had accused him to the Pope of having instigated Giacomo and Beatrice to bring to pass their father's murder, the unfortunate expatriate, who had in fact had no share in that deed, combats the charge with loud protests: "Let a minute investigation be made on this head, and let every ounce of evidence that may be found against your petitioner be counted a pound, and if any be found, I say not only that he had no part in it, but that they have trumped up a cause *post factum;* and he will be content to incur the penalty of death, and from now on he declares himself ready for the most cruel and horrible death that has ever been invented." He continues with much emphasis and at considerable length, posing as a much persecuted person.

Before his three years were up he was permitted to re-enter the Papal State, though not Rome itself. Almost four years later he was writing to the Pope pleading again to be repatriated.

We do not know when his request was granted. He certainly led for a long time a roving life and one filled with hardships. It was not till after his seventieth year, on February 23, 1633, that he obtained absolution from his condemnations, and "perpetual silence" concerning his misdeeds!

Two months later, it appears, he was again occupying his post as Referendary in the Papal Chancery![1]

[1] Bertolotti (p. 175) produces part of a donation made in March, 1633, by Guerra, in which he is called "S.mi D.ni referendarius"; he gives the signature: "Belgio, Notary, 1630-9, fol. 303." Yet it has not been possible to discover the original act. The familiar *Relatione istorica* has no lack of wild tales in regard to Guerra also. It states that nothing more was heard of him; some protested that he had "gone to the Indies, some to Turkey; nay, finally some said that he had turned Mussulman, and others vowed he had perished at sea."

CHAPTER XXXII

THE LEGEND OF BEATRICE

We have seen what an immense and grief-stricken procession followed Beatrice's body from the Piazza di Ponte Sant' Angelo to San Pietro in Montorio. We have seen the throngs that crowded about her tomb until the last hours of night. For many days more, perhaps for months, a host of people trooped to the spot, bearing candles and flowers. Then, naturally, the numbers dwindled; but there was always some inquirer for the sepulchre which enclosed the mortal remains of Beatrice Cenci.

It has been written that Clement VIII himself, offended at the pitiful pilgrimage, which implied a rebuke to his sentence, ordered that the marble slab which bore the name of the executed girl should be reversed so that the epitaph could no longer be read, and that no trace of her might remain. Others have said that the pilgrimage, from 1848 on, having been converted into an actual "anti-Papal hurly-burly"; the Franciscans "in restoring the pavement of the church, removed that stone, substituting another without inscription, in full harmony as regards material and dimensions with the sections of the new marble paving."[1]

But these tales are false. As in the case of the other Cenci who were executed with her, and indeed as was the general case with executed criminals, no epitaph of any sort, not even a name, was carved on the tomb of Beatrice Cenci.[2] It is true, on the other hand, that the impression of the terrible tragedies in which she was a leading figure, popular commiseration, and the pitifulness

[1] Rodàni, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[2] The anonymous friar who recorded the description of San Pietro in Montorio in 1782 wrote that there was no "incision of letters" on Beatrice's sepulchre.

of the monks must have long kept alive the memory of her resting-place. This was not, as has been asserted, "before the high altar, to the right as one faces it, but outside the rail, a meter's distance from it";[1] it was in fact in the Choir itself, as appears from an inventory of the Convent.

When the new pavement was laid, it became necessary to remove the old slabs. Curiosity led to an attentive examination to see if any one of them bore the name of Beatrice Cenci cut on the under side. But the investigation proved fruitless, as might have been expected.

Other facts may be alleged to prove our contention. On October 2, 1640, Cardinal Antonio Barberini issued an edict against those who should remove sepulchral slabs from the churches.[2] If the inscribed memorial of Beatrice had been in the pavement of San Pietro in Montorio at that time, Gasparo Alveri would inevitably have found it twenty-four years later, and, on account of the celebrity of the name, would have carefully transcribed it. On the contrary he says no word of it, though he reproduces *all* the inscriptions of that church.[3]

In 1640, then, there was no slab bearing the name of Beatrice Cenci in San Pietro in Montorio. And, we repeat, there had been no such memorial earlier.

Various tales have clustered around the ultimate fate of Beatrice's sepulchre. With all their variants and contradictions, they agree in saying that it was desecrated during the disturbances of the French Revolution, toward the end of the eighteenth century.

Sebastiani writes, in his notes to the pseudo De Angelis: "The sepulchre of Beatrice Cenci remained intact until the month of May, 1798, when the furious and barbarous Roman Republicans drove out the Franciscan monks, and, as in many other churches, devastated all the pavement of the church and the choir to extract from the

[1] Rodàni, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[2] Fioravante Martinelli: *Roma sacra* (Rome, 1668), p. 50; Giov. Marangoni: *Delle cose gentilesche di Roma* (Rome, 1744), p. 423.

[3] *Della Roma in ogni stato* (Rome, 1664), II, pp. 308-321.

Supposed Portrait of Antonina Cenci
Gallery Barberina, Rome

tombs their leaden coffins, and from that of Beatrice the jewels that report said were there. Thus the bones and ashes of all the dead buried in this church were scattered and confused, and at present no trace of them remains. We have been assured by the son of one of those furious Republicans who directed the sacrilege, that Beatrice's head was in a silver basin, inside the coffin, and resting on her breast." [1]

And Giuseppe Antonio Sala wrote in his *Diario Romano*, under the date of July 21, 1798: "S. Pietro in Montorio, with its convent, gardens, and all its other annexes, has been sold to a Frenchman for the very low price of 2,000 piastres.[2] This fellow has destroyed everything to extract metals, iron-work, marbles, etc.; he has even broken up the paving. . . . As the celebrated Beatrice Cenci is buried in this church, the Frenchman wishes to carry off her skull, and is in search of it. Presuming that the sacristan of the church would know, he summoned the man to ask for the whereabouts of the skull, and exhibited to him as a reward the miraculous image of Maria Santissima, called that 'of the letter,' which is in the church." [3]

But the most trustworthy version, since it is narrated by an eye-witness of authority, seems to be the one given us by Carlo Falconieri. In the course of his biography of Vincenzo Camuccini he writes: "[Camuccini] told us that one day he was at San Pietro in Montorio studying the 'Transfiguration' (they had already deprived the church of its use for worship and had assigned it for some other purpose). He heard the street door open and saw a throng of people surge forward, whose ringleader was a French sculptor, a Republican, one of the madmen of the Mountain. Our artist ran to see what was the reason for the uproar. He was thunderstruck and appalled to see that they were tearing open tombs, penetrating into graves; horrible to state, a decree commanded that they

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 246.
[2] Probably the gold piastre, worth about seven lire.—*Trans.*
[3] Vol. II (Rome, 1882), pp. 40-41.

should melt up all the leaden coffins they could find, even by sacrilegiously laying waste the bones of the dead, in order to make cannon balls and to scatter death throughout Europe. . . . In this fanatical tumult, it was not long ere those malefactors, opening the first tomb, that of Beatrice Cenci, discovered there—oh, horrid sight!—a headless skeleton covered with black weeds. The severed skull stood beside it; it was laid in a silver vessel and was also covered with a black veil which, at a touch, crumbled into dust. 'Poor Beatrice!' was Camuccini's cry; and with a bursting heart he told the rabble in a few words the cruel tale of that unfortunate lady. Some of them were impressed; but the French sculptor, to provoke a laugh, held the skull aloft, and dandling it in his hands, carried it off with him."[1]

A wretched fate indeed! That unhappy head, twice disdainfully tossed about, once by the Papal executioner, once by the jesting Jacobin, seems the symbol of the alternating and contradictory record of Beatrice's fame. However pitiless toward her pitiless father, she yet deserved at least to rest in the sepulchre she had chosen in the tranquil church among the pines and cypresses of the tree-crowned Gianicolo. Perchance she prayed that silence and oblivion should cover her life, her misdeeds, her crime, her wrongs, her death. But men have been stirred by the horror of the parricide and its punishment, by the beauty of her body and the depth of her repentance, by the unholy courage of her revenge and by her

[1] *Vita di Vincenzo Camuccini* (Rome, 1875), pp. 309-310. In a letter to the editor of La Liberta, published in Rome, 22 January, 1885, Monsignore Vincenzo Tissano, archbishop of Nisibin, recalls having received the following statement from Cardinal Antonio Tosti, also of Rome: "Happening one day to enter this church (San Pietro in Montorio) I saw a French colonel who was directing the work of excavation at the very spot where Beatrice Cenci had been interred. Rome was at that time occupied by French troops. My interest was aroused and I contrived to be a spectator of the work. After some time the workmen came upon the skeleton of the poor Cenci girl, together with her skull in a silver basin. Elated at his discovery the French colonel carried off skull and basin, leaving the rest of these pitiful remains in disorder." The archbishop later falls into error in placing this episode between 1809 and 1814.

heroic resignation upon the scaffold. They have never left her memory in peace. It has become a bannered emblem for thousands who have indulged in polemics, always excessive whether the attacks be made upon her or upon her judges.

The "legend of Beatrice" was born on the day she died; or if the fancies which absolve her and the invention of certain episodes are to be considered as a legend, it may be said that it was born even before her death and has suffused every tale of her, down to our own day. Recently works of more historical worth have been published, but they have invariably been deplorably partisan in their moral assessment of facts and characters.

It is an error to seek to identify the source of the legend of Beatrice in Shelley's tragedy, in Stendhal's tale, in Guerrazzi's romance, or even in Muratori's *Annali*.[1] The legends of the sons sent to study in Salamanca, the father's outrage upon his daughter's honour, the love of Mario Guerra for Beatrice, Guerra's flight in a charcoal-seller's costume, her extreme youth and purity, her steadfastness under the longest and most atrocious torture—all these were promulgated either during her lifetime or a short time after her death. Other details are merely amplifications or alterations of certain facts, such as the scene of the brigands lying in wait for Francesco Cenci's capture, the planting of the nail in his temple, the casting of his body into the wilderness by the two women. But how can one collect here—why, should one, indeed collect —all the fables and errors that have accumulated around the Cenci and especially around Beatrice? For us it is sufficient reward to have established the truth, without constituting ourselves champions either of the Cenci, or of Clement VIII and the Aldobrandini, either accusers of the Vatican or its advocates.

For into this long conflict so much deformation of the truth and exaltation of feeling has entered that the plain record of the facts has been mutilated hardly less than

[1] See *l'Intermédiaire*, Paris, 1908, coll. 172 and 344.

were the bodies of the Cenci themselves. In 1872 a committee was formed to place an inscription in the Capitol "which should recall to men the name and the misfortunes of Beatrice Cenci, together with the criminal wickedness of the priests." [1] The inscription, which had been previously composed by Guerrazzi, was as follows:

BEATRICE CENCI:
NOT CRUEL DEATH
NOT THE RAVISHED FLOWER OF YOUTH
NOT THE DENIAL OF LOVE'S BLISS
NOT THAT MY WEALTH, MY ONLY GUILT,
WAS REFT AWAY
NOT THE VIOLATION OF MY TOMB:
THESE WRONGS DID NOT SO GRIEVE ME
AS THAT MY HONORABLE NAME
WAS FOR LONG YEARS DEFILED.
ROMAN SISTERS
NOW THAT YOU ARE FREE SO TO DO
GIVE AGAIN A SEPULCHRE TO MY ASHES
AND HONOR TO MY MEMORY
SO WILL YOU DO SERVICE
TO ETERNAL JUSTICE
TO THE FATHERLAND
TO ME
AND TO YOURSELVES LIKEWISE.[2]

[1] *L'Opinione nazionale,* July 19, 1872.
[2] See * p. 273.

The letter with which Guerrazzi accompanied the epitaph said among other things: "Wrath and unwearied warfare must be waged against the Priest of Rome. . . . The Priest has hoisted Christ aloft as the contrabandist hoists a friendly flag to smuggle in his wares. . . . Let the Priest be beaten with the cross." Meantime the architect, Vincenzo Grainello, drew up a project for a monument to Beatrice.[1]

When Guerrazzi wrote his novel, the Pope was still master of Rome. The novel might be considered such an attack upon the temporal power as was "The History of

* BEATRICE CENCI:

MORTE ACERBA

FIORE DI GIOVINEZZA PERDUTO

GIOIE D'AMORE NEGATE

CENSO, UNICA COLPA, RAPITO

SEPOLCRO DISPERSO

TANTO NON MI DOLSERO

QUANTO LA FAMA

PER LUNGO SECOLO CONTAMINATA

ORA CHE PER VOI SI PUÒ

SORELLE ROMANE

RENDETE ALLE OSSA IL SEPOLCRO

ALLA MEMORIA LA FAMA

CIÒ FACENDO GIOVERETE

ALLA GIUSTIZIA ETERNA

ALLA PATRIA

A ME ED ANCO A VOI.

Gazzetta d'Italia, of July, 1872. Maes called Beatrice "a maiden whom all Rome still weeps and adores, who was bled to death by the Aldobrandine Pope, to filch away her wealth and steal it from the poor of Rome, to whom she had willed it."

[1] A. De Gubernatis: *Dizionario degli artisti Italiani viventi* (Rome, 1889), p. 237.

the Popes" by Aurelio Angelo Bianchi Giovini, "The Mysteries of the Vatican" by Franco Mistrali, "The Life of Jesus Christ" by Gaetano Valeriani, "The Reminiscences of Judas" by Ferdinando Petruccelli della Gattina. But in 1872 the temporal power had already fallen.

Later, in 1906, a Roman association voted an order of the day in which it deplored the "modern Pharisees" who were attempting to "befoul with their mire the figure of the Roman virgin, Beatrice Cenci, whom the wickedness and cupidity of Clement VIII crowned with an aureole of the purest martyrdom. . . . It has therefore considered initiating a subscription among the free-thinkers of the entire world, for the purpose of erecting a marble memorial to that Beatrice who, in her sixteenth year, received martyrdom at the hands of the same Pope who, to celebrate the Jubilee, burnt alive the philosopher of Nola [1] in the Campo dei Fiori. . . ."

The very journal which published this "order of the day" advised "that in this matter of Beatrice Cenci, progress should be somewhat cautious. Before any appeal for subscriptions be issued, it would be well to make a more thorough examination of the historical truth concerning her." [2]

But if the heedless enthusiasm of "democratic" writers and clubs seems to us reprehensible from the point of view of history, no less must we blame the false, cold-blooded appraisal of events and persons, including even the insincere and quibbling defence of Francesco Cenci, for his harsh treatment of his children, which is essayed by those who at all costs would defend every act of Clement VIII and his ministers.

Thus we read that this abominable creature, who wasted a large part of his patrimony in paying fines to escape imprisonment, was "good," or even "an excellent steward of his estate"; [3] that he "loved his family

[1] Giordano Bruno, see p. 208.
[2] *La Vita*, Year 2, no. 112 (April 22, 1906).
[3] Rinieri, pp. 133 and 336.

dearly" [1] and that as for his passions "he satisfied them outside his family, of whose honour he was most jealous," [2] whereas on the contrary he beat his sons mercilessly, half starved them, kept strumpets under his own roof and defiled his home with every species of iniquity. We read that he had "truly religious feelings," [3] because, between two outbursts of violence, he restored churches and left donations to young girls. This is to confuse religion which is purity of life and understanding with external deeds and practices, the fruit either of hypocrisy or superstition. We read that the fine of 100,000 scudi, paid to escape the sodomites' pyre, was "a reparation to public morality obtained in the best manner" [4] that the rope with which the limbs of the Cenci and others were dislocated was "a contrivance which extorts the truth"; that its application as given to Beatrice was "a slight lifting"; that all the father's cruelties, including the iniquitous imprisonment of Lucrezia and Beatrice and the beating with the bull-pizzle, were, in comparison with the vengeance taken, mere "airy trifles, not even to be considered a moment"; we read even that Beatrice could not have been "so beautiful," if in 1598, when more than twenty years old, she had not yet found a husband, as though her father had not confined her straitly in Petrella Castle for the precise purpose of preventing any marriage, and the payment of a dowry, which would have been an inconvenience at the moment!

Ah, could one but discover and put into use some "contrivance" that would "extort the truth" from certain "historians," no matter in what party they choose to enroll themselves!

We had hoped to find at La Petrella a fresh and original tradition concerning the Cenci, especially concerning Beatrice. We had hoped to find at least a trace, however deformed, of historical fact. But we quickly real-

1 Bertolotti, p. 23.
2 Bertolotti, p. 256.
3 Bertolotti, p. 23; Rinieri, p. 99.
4 Rinieri, p. 111.

ised only too well that even to this remote village the tales of the romancers have penetrated. The ferocity of Francesco, and Beatrice's beauty and chastity—these are the contrasts on which all love to dwell. The father lays a trap for his daughter; she avenges herself by driving a dagger into his ear and casting him out the window. The crime comes to light on account of the great quantity of blood which had soaked the garments.

An old woman who told the tale added: Francesco "Cianci" would stand on the balcony and look at the girls; he would choose the most beautiful and have her seized; then, his furious lusts appeased, he would cast her into a pit the base of which bristled with knives—the famous "razor-pit" which popular fancy puts in every grim ruined castle. Perhaps this is only an appalling amplification of Beatrice's words when alluding to the crenellated parapet of the castle terrace, she said that she had leaned over it only "when Signor Francesco was present" and when, if "some woman was passing by he would have me call her, either to see her or for some other idea of his."

We gleaned also some references to Beatrice's torture and to her tomb.

They hung her up by her yellow hair, which reached to her knees (the same story is told in many of the old romances). But hardly was she dead before they repented of such cruelty and dressed her in cloth-of-gold. A half century later the tomb was reopened; she was found within unchanged, ever beautiful, still in her golden garments. "And that's just as true to-day, and you gentlemen who are in Rome can prove it by getting the tomb opened!"

In a letter of doubtful authenticity, published by Dalbono, and bearing the date of July 20, 1599, Beatrice offers all her possessions, totalling a very large sum, "to repair some building or bridge or road."[1] In this sentence some have found a confirmation of the legend that Beatrice proposed to rebuild the Palatine Bridge, broken

[1] *Op cit.*, pp. 434-435.

down by the flood of December, 1598, "in cement mixed with pounded eggshell!" [1]

But popular folk lore has conceived something quite different. The story goes that the Cenci fortune, sequestrated by Clement VIII, passed to Paul V, who made a gift of it to his nephews. But God had decreed that this property should remain in the hands of the Borghese only until the day on which Beatrice's sufferings in Purgatory should end. When, therefore, the financial disasters of the Borghese began, the common folk understood that Beatrice had come forth from Purgatory and had ascended to Heaven. This tale was told to Girard de Rialle; [2] and Carlo Merkel reports that when visiting the Villa Borghese at Frascati he learned from a villager that it had been lost by the great Roman family because it was ill gotten property: "Fair Cengia was a goddess of beauty; her father dishonoured her, and for revenge she killed him by stabbing a silver pin into his ear. Pope Borghese then had her killed and her whole house wiped out, sparing only a brother of Cengia's; and the Pope had him gelded and made a singer out of him." [3]

Naturally this eunuch must have been Bernardo; but historians need not trouble themselves to disprove this particular legend; Bernardo himself did so by espousing Clizia and begetting seven children!

In the piazzetta of San Tommaso de' Cenci are two antique marbles. One, between the two doors of the church, is an altar adorned with griffins, excellently carved; the other, in the adjoining house, is a unique Roman sepulchral pillar, dedicated to Caius Cincius Saliandrus by his sons Marcianus, Januarius, Severus, and Erclanius.[4] From this family Cristoforo senior and

[1] Maes: *Il Cracas*, no. 163 (Sept. 6, 1890); no. 164 (Sept. 13, 1890).

[2] *Revue des traditions populaires*, no. 1, p. 56.

[3] *Due leggende intorno a Beatrice Cenci ed a casa Borghese*, in the *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popoalri*, XII (Turin-Paelrmo, 1893), pp. 360-364.

[4] *Corpus Inscriptionum latinarum*, VI, 2.

Francesco claimed their descent. But the common people, scornful of such boasting, though saying that the altar is the "holy-water stoop of the Fair Cencia," intimate that the other is a monument that the wicked and heretical Francesco set over the remains of his dog, after having interred them in holy ground!

Another legend is current concerning the ruins of a nympheum near Torrenova, the famous estate of which we have spoken and which was confiscated from the Cenci to be assigned, after a somewhat suspicious auction, to Giovan Francesco Aldobrandino.

"Here," writes Tomassetti, "are the remains of a nympheum of the XVIth century. They consist of a small island surrounded by a canal with a little bridge, which gives access to a small and elegant room adorned with paintings and mural inscriptions. Traces of the little artificial stream which supplied water for the baths are still to be perceived; but to what a state is the central room reduced! A headless statue of peperino [1] representing a piping Pan of classic model, remains on the upper part of the building. The exterior preserves a single figure of classic type in chiaroscuro, on the pilaster to the left as one enters. The vault of the arch is ornamented with graceful decorations. In the interior there remain, high up, two small figures of nude nymphs bathing. There are other remains here and there. The whole is on the point of disappearing under a mass of climbing plants and through the unworthy abandonment in which this precious building has been left." [2]

The common folk will have it that this nympheum was "Fair Cenci's bath," or the place where Beatrice loved to immerse her pure and lovely form in the fresh, limpid waters. And in the headless piping Pan the peasants see an image of her decapitated body!

Elsewhere in the vicinity the name of Beatrice is repeated: for example, in one of the smaller caves of the grotto near La Petrella on the Liri called the "Impic-

[1] Tufa from the Alban hills.—*Trans.*

[2] *La Campagna romana*, III (Rome, 1913), pp. 404-405.

cato" [1] grotto, from a dark stalactite which suggests the comparison. The story goes that Beatrice penetrated to this point to rescue her father, who had been confined there by the bandits.[2] This alone shows that the legend is a modern one derived from Guerrazzi's novel, partly also because of his confusion of La Petrella del Salto with La Petrella del Liri.

Some have attempted to identify a small room in the English College in the via Monserrato in Rome with the prison-cell in which Beatrice was confined. There is no basis for the statement other than the fact that at the time a wing of the College extended to the building in which were the cells of Corte Savella.

Nor can we regard with certainty the identity of Beatrice's quarters in the Castel Sant' Angelo with a cell to which one descends from the Court of Alexander VI, or the "Oil-Court." One enters there through a low, narrow door, with door-posts and architrave of blue sandstone; the cell measures about four by five metres, has a vaulted roof, and contains a high window, more for ventilation than for light. In any case it is not to be admitted that the adjoining cell, almost exactly similar, was Lucrezia's prison. We know that was above the Court of Paul III, or the "Racquet Court," near the chapel.

Finally, at the headquarters of the Company of St. John the Beheaded a high-backed chair with arms is shown us in which we are assured Beatrice rested before going to her death. The chair is considerably more recent than the execution. The tablets, however, of which we have spoken, in the quarters of that Company are well worth seeing. These tablets were held before the condemned men on their way to their death. The large lanterns, with the traditional severed head of St. John the Baptist in its platter painted on the glass, also merit inspection. It was with these that the Brothers made their night journeys; and we know that it was by night

1 Gallows-bird.

2 Enrico Abbate: *Guida dell' Abruzzo* (Rome, 1903), p. 180; *Le grotte inesplorate d'Abruzzo,* in *La Tribuna,* Jan. 5, 1923.

that some of them went to Tordinona and to Corte Savella to prepare the Cenci for death.

It will be noticed that all the legends cluster about Beatrice. The people have had no concern for the other Cenci. We must make this slight exception, that some one, referring to the rich tabernacle of the Altar of the Sacrament in St. John Lateran, executed by Pietro Targioni, has said that all the gems with which it is incrusted came from the treasure which the Pope confiscated from the Cenci.[1]

At any rate Beatrice alone is the saint, the martyr, the pure spirit; she is the victim of dreadful people and of a dreadful epoch, the mere remembrance of which is enough to awaken appalling ideas. Gioacchino Belli, in his sonnets, "*Li spiriti*," said:

God save us! That house there—over the way—
With windows broke through—
Well, a pilgrim came there, in Cenci's day,
And an abbot he slew![2]

Under the head of legend also must be classified the alleged portrait of Beatrice in the Barberini Gallery. This is a painful sacrifice to historical honesty, for nothing would interest us more than to possess the likeness of the protagonist of so great a tragedy. But no portrait of her nor of any other member of her terrible family has come down to us. The title of "elder sister" or of "mother" of Beatrice Cenci is assigned to a figure in the style of Caravaggio, also with a turban,[3] in the same gal-

[1] Maes, cards in the Vittorio Emmanuele Library, *Cenci*, II, no. 3214.

[2] Dio sia con noi! Lo vedi, eh?, cquer casino
co' le finestre tutte svetriate?
Llì, a tempi de la Cenci, un pellegrino
de nottetempo ci ammazzò un abate.
From *I sonetti romanceschi*, edited by Luigi Morandi, VI (*Città di Castello*, 1896), p. 148.

[3] Stendhal thought that the portrait in the style of Caravaggio represented the stepmother, but Montégut said with the utmost seriousness that it should be considered that of her own mother, for the features resembled those of Beatrice, while they did not resemble those in Pulzone's portrait!

lery; that of "stepmother" of Beatrice is given to another, painted by Scipione Gaetano, called Il Pulzone, and to an engraving attributed to Reni himself and executed by Annibale Costa. But these identifications are not justified by any document, any tradition, any old catalogue, nor by any indication visible on the canvases. On the contrary, in Pulzone's portrait we see the arms of the Colonna; and as Beatrice's stepmother passed from her own family, the Petroni, to that of the Velli, thence to that of the Cenci (and thence to the scaffold), she was never a member of the House of Colonna.[1]

As for portraits of the individuals who had a share in our story, aside from the Popes and Cardinals, we possess only those of Marzio Colonna and Farinaccio.

Let us return a moment to the alleged portrait of Beatrice, of which, for more than a century, copies have been made by the million in colours, and in the form of engravings and photographs. On this portrait poets and romancers have poured forth rivers of tears and oceans of phrases.

What a harvest of such words might be gathered! Stendhal, in his aria, perceived a soul "at the very moment of shedding scalding tears"; Guido Reni, he wrote, "has cast about Beatrice's neck an insignificant bit of drapery; he has placed a turban on her head; he has evidently exactly reproduced the costume which she had made for her execution, and the dishevelled hair of a poor girl of sixteen who has but just surrendered to despair. The face is sweet and beautiful, the expression very gentle, the eyes extremely large; they have the astonished air of a person who has just been surprised at the very moment of shedding scalding tears."[2] And said Émile Montégut:

[1] Romolo Artioli wrote: "An oil painting which I examined in the house of the Mayor of Piediluco is perhaps a portrait of Count Francesco Cenci." In *La verità di Beatrice Cenci e la scoperta del ritratto del suo difensore,* in *L'Italia moderna,* III (Rome, 1905), no. 28. But when we questioned Sr. Artioli himself, he declared that his words were a mere hypothesis!

[2] *Les Cenci,* in the *Revue des deux Mondes,* IVth Series, Year VII (Paris, 1837), II, p. 10.

"The contemplation of the portrait of Beatrice Cenci is so painful as to cause actual suffering. . . . The greyish-white, almost leaden, shade of these habiliments of death is in admirable harmony with the sorrows of that soul, enveloped in impenetrable clouds. The mouth would fain open to speak; it dares not; but there is no need of its revelations. All the features of the face express themselves with an agonising eloquence; and the eyes, red with the corrosive tears which have burned their lids, bid us know that within this flesh so soon to be mutilated there lives a soul succumbing under the weight of a secret that would weary the strength of Hercules." [1]

Among the Italians, Guerrazzi went so far as to say that he had written his novel, under the inspiration of this "divine semblance." And said Agostino Ademollo: "During almost two centuries this virtuous and unhappy girl has received as tribute the tears of all who have gazed upon her." And, to choose among many, these are the words of Provaglio: "Guido Reni painted her while she languished in the cells of Castel Sant' Angelo. His delicate brush reproduced her ineffable graces with an intense love and the most exquisite touch, so that they appear suffused with a breath of celestial joy, that stirs all hearts and senses."

This tale of Guido's introduction into the prisons to make Beatrice's portrait was perhaps inspired by the fact that Guercino had "drawn a Susanna from a beautiful woman in the archi-episcopal prisons of Bologna." The legend was born about half a century after the other tale that the charming figure now in the Barberini gallery represented Beatrice Cenci. There are various versions of the legend. Sebastiani, in his notes to the pseudo De Angelis, affirms that the portrait was painted by order of Cardinal Ascanio Colonna. From Castel Sant' Angelo the scene was transferred to Corte Savella; it is on record that

[1] Émile Montégut: *Les portraits de la Galerie Barberini—Béatrix Cenci*, in the *Impressions de voyage et d'art*, publ. in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, Year XL, second period, vol. LXXXVIII (Paris, 1870), p. 498. Also in his *Poètes et artistes de l'Italie* (Paris, 1881), pp. 415-429.

Farinaccio himself brought Guido Reni there "on the eve of her death." Under an engraving of 1861, falsely attributed to Bartolomeo Pinelli, we find another version. As it was difficult to penetrate into the cells, especially at so supreme a moment, Guido Reni took his stand at a window and made a sketch, which he later developed into a painting, of Beatrice as she passed to her death; in the painting, however, he has shown the victim seated!

Various canvases have been painted dealing with the theme of Guido's introduction into the prison-cell: one by Achille Guerra ("Interrogation of Beatrice Cenci"); one by Tommaso De Vivo, exhibited in Naples in 1848; one by Giuseppe Sogni, of 1852; one by Rocchetti, exhibited in Milan in the same year,[1] etc. In these paintings Beatrice's figure is always in her Oriental costume; and in this dress she is represented in other pictures such as Guerrino Guardabassi's "Last Meeting of Beatrice and her Stepmother" and "Last Confession of Beatrice Cenci"; and also in several sculptures, including a bust by Emilio Dies and the statues by Vincenzo Annibale, Vincenzo Lucardi, Antonio Bottinelli, etc. This singular costume was partly abandoned in Paul Delaroche's painting (1855), representing "Beatrice on her Way to Execution." This was once in the Werle collection at Rheims; it was engraved by E. Girardet from a design by Schröder. The costume was likewise abandoned by Bernardo Celentano in his sketch, "Beatrice in Prison," now possessed by the family of the Cenci-Bolognetti, princes of Vicovaro; by Cesare Fracassini in the spirited sketch representing "Beatrice on the Scaffold while Bernardo Swoons";[2] and by Dario Querci in his canvas: "The Mob Thronging to

[1] *L'Album* of Rome, XIX (Rome, 1852). Rocchetti painted also a picture of Beatrice suspended by her hair. Artaud says that in the Sala Accademica of Rome, in 1835, a painting of Enrico Schopin was exhibited which had Beatrice Cenci for its subject, but he does not give any further indication of the episode. See *Supplimento to the Biografia universale* (Venice, 1839), p. 686.

[2] This is in Rome (via Ripetta, 22) in the possession of Cav. Riccardo Fracassini, son of the celebrated painter.

See Beatrice's Body," which he pictures lying on the bier at the entrance of the Ponte Sant' Angelo, etc.

We shall not speak of the illustrations, occasionally adequate, often mediocre, and very often hideous, to novels which have the story of the Cenci as their subject. We prefer to conclude our history with the result of some interesting researches concerning the portrait in the Barberini Gallery.

Is there any authority, respectable by reason of its age, for believing that this painting portrays Beatrice?

In the old catalogues of the pictures of the Barberini family, published by Bertolotti and Orbaan, no painting is listed as a "portrait of Beatrice"; nor is there even any picture included which, under some other title, might be considered the one which we are now examining. It was useless for Bertolotti to linger over a "Madonna in Egyptian Costume by Paolo of Verona" registered in one of those catalogues. Although he decided against the identity of the two, he gave rise to the stupid affirmation of the Edinburgh Review that the presumed portrait of Beatrice was merely a Madonna of Paolo Veronese![1] Bertolotti wrote further: "I once more examined the 'Catalogue of the Paintings and Pictures Now in the Palace of the House of Colonna,' printed in Rome in 1783; nowhere is there any mention of the portrait of Beatrice. The fiction which made of her the subject of the portrait of a girl in the Barberini Gallery, attributing it to the hand of Reni, perhaps goes no further back than 1800, as may be inferred from the accounts of travellers." The examination of the catalogues of the Colonna pictures, which later in large part passed to the Barberini family, was a step in the right direction; but Bertolotti, with his accustomed haste, did not perceive that in this very catalogue was the object of his search![2]

The painting came to the Barberini family in the last

[1] *The Edinburgh Review*, no. 305 (January, 1879).

[2] Rodàni (p. 71), following Bertolotti blindly, repeats the same incredible error; thereupon he erected a vast and airy structure of fancy.

years of the eighteenth century, together with the dowry of that Vittoria Colonna who married Prince don Francesco Barberini. He died at a very advanced age in 1853, after having had his gallery put in order by Camuccini. Now in that very "Catalogue of Paintings," drawn up in 1783, that is, when they were still in the possession of the Colonna family, we find under number 847, on page 111: "Picture of a head. Portrait, believed to be of the Cenci girl. Artist unknown." On the supposition that Beatrice is here indicated, we are thus led some distance back into the eighteenth century. And in addition, we are carried back to that century by certain printed reproductions, such as that of Luigi Cunego from a drawing by Gaetano Savorelli (1785), that of Clemente Kohl from a drawing by Linder (1789),[1] that of Pietro Bettellini, and the one executed by L. Legoux under the direction of Bartolozzi, which attributes the painting to Guido Reni, and bears the date "April 26, 1794." All of these indicate that Reni's original existed in the Colonna Gallery.

The painting was, then, in the Colonna Gallery; and as early as 1783 it was suspected that it portrayed Beatrice Cenci. We ourselves incline to believe that this title was given it shortly after Lodovico Antonio Muratori had, in 1749, re-awakened the memory of Beatrice in his celebrated *Annali d'Italia*, surrounding her figure chiefly with a strong emotional atmosphere of pathos.

It is certain that neither the identification of the subject with Beatrice nor its attribution to Guido go farther back than the eighteenth century. Later still is the hypothesis that the same painter repeated her likeness in the Virgin of Genoa and in the St. Michael of the Capuchins of Rome, in the latter impersonating, by the archangel laying the dragon low, Beatrice's innocence at last triumphing, and confounding the iniquity leagued for her destruction!

In any case the whole tale of Reni's entry into Beatrice's cell, or of any such painting by him from life, col-

[1] *Geschichte der Hinrichtung der Beatrice Cenci and ihrer Familie unter Papst Clemens VIII in Rom* (Vienna, 1789).

lapses in the face of historical evidence. The painter came to Rome for the first time three years after Beatrice was executed.

The legend, however, rooted as it is in popular emotion, which is ill disposed to abandon any error it cherishes, has never yielded to critical enquiry. Yet it may be noted that this criticism began fairly early, by denying that the portrait represented Beatrice: it even went too far and denied, wrongly, that Guido was the artist.

As early as 1839 Artnau, in his Supplement to the Universal Biography published at Venice, repudiated Reni as its painter. In 1861 Salvatore Muzzi attributed the canvas to Andrea Sacchi and judged the subject to be a Sibyl. Sixteen years later Tomasetti, followed later by Crawford, left both Reni and Beatrice out of his calculations: others exclude Beatrice as subject while admitting Reni as painter, though not without suggesting a possibility of Guercino. Leaving a hundred other critics aside, Burckhardt finally declares that the famous head is not even beautiful and that all its fascination comes from the legend which has grown up around it.

Many years ago, while studying the Persian Sibyl attributed to Guido Cagnacci in the Borghese Gallery of Rome, the thought occurred to ourselves that the famous "Beatrice Cenci" might be from the same hand. The theory found many supporters, but a later and more intensive study of Cagnacci's work led us to renounce the idea.

That it is an authentic work of Guido we are now more and more persuaded. Besides the head, so typical of Reni's work, there is the no less typical greenish tint of the shadows, the yellowish white of the high-lights in the flesh tones.

Others still hold to Guercino. But in the canvases of this master there is a cristalline quality lacking in the painter of Cento; the latter, moreover, prepared his canvas with a far stronger priming and used much more impasto in his brush work. Neither drawing, colour nor

(See Vol. II, p. 287)

SIBILLA SAMIA, BY GUIDO RENI
In the Gallery Barberina

type of head support its attribution (with Tietze and F. P. Richter) to Albani.

The subject of the picture in the Barberini Gallery, we believe, is a Samian Sibyl, or perhaps the youthful sibyl of the motto: "Salve casta Syon per multaque passa puella."

The fashion of winding a turban round the heads of their girl models and letting a long mantle droop from the shoulders, perhaps with the idea of Orientalising the subject, was one that had gradually come into favour with the Bolognese school of the 16th Century, and later with Roman artists. The head-dress had already been adopted for certain "gipsy" Madonnas, the most pleasing of which is the Correggio in the Naples Museo. There are turbans on the "Susanna" of Guercino in the Uffizi Gallery, on the "Herodias" of Guido in the Corsini Gallery at Rome, and on one of the maid-servants in the same Guido's "Rebecca at the Well" in the Pitti Gallery at Florence. We may mention a fourth example in the fresco on the wall of San Gregorio at Rome, "St. Andrew on his Way to Martyrdom"; a fifth by Pietro Pari in the church of Santa Maria in Via Lata, also at Rome; a sixth by Cantarini in the Borghese Gallery, etc. But while in such subjects this turban head-dress appears only from time to time, it had become typical of the Bolognese and their followers whenever a sibyl was the subject. We may mention the two "Samian" sibyls of Guercino in the Uffizi Gallery and the Palazzo Reale at Genoa, the "Cumæan" sibyl of Reni at the Uffizi, the "Persian" sibyl of Guercino and the "Cumæan" of Domenichino in the Capitoline Gallery, the Cumæan sibyl, also of Domenichino, and the Persian sibyl attributed to Cagnacci in the Borghese Gallery: and, among their followers, the "Tiburtina" in the Civic Museum at the Tivoli. The list might be lengthened considerably.

The girl in the Barberini Gallery, whose head droops so gracefully above her left shoulder, whose brown hair escapes from below her turban, the girl who returns your gaze with so naïve an indifference, her face neither illu-

mined by joy nor shadowed by grief, is not Beatrice Cenci. She is the Samian sibyl.

We say this for the benefit of historians and artists. For the great public, we know well, the picture will remain, to all eternity, Beatrice Cenci and none other.

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY THE WHITEFRIARS PRESS, LTD.,
LONDON AND TONBRIDGE.